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Hindu Social Progress

BEING PAPERS
COLLECTED AND EDITED
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PREFACE.

IT has been observed by the Editor of *New India* that "the social reform movement among us, not only in Bombay or Madras, but even in Bengal—indeed all over India has been conducted so far, almost entirely, not only without adequate sociological knowledge, but also without any serious apprehension of the need of such knowledge.' This remark is so true that it requires no comment although those persons who are acting on the stage of Hindu Social Reform do not naturally see the drama in the light in which the outside on-looker realizes it. This serious defect in the situation cannot be long allowed to continue uncorrected; for in its continuance there lurk the vital germs of much serious danger for the future. With the object of removing this defect in some small measure, we have reprinted in this book some of the important papers that have from time to time appeared in the columns of the *Indian Progress* with a few alterations here and there. We hope that these will prove helpful to Hindu patriots and others who are interested in the welfare of our country, in explaining in a fair way the basic principles on which the organization of Hindu Society rests as well as in indicating the true method of work by which further advancement in social and moral progress is to be effectively achieved among the Hindu people. It is proposed to work out the practical details of the various problems connected with the sociology of the Hindus in a comprehensive manner in the coming years

Our thanks are due to the writers of the several articles included in this book for the permission which they have so readily accorded to us In Appendix A we have published the opinions of some of our distinguished countrymen on Social Reform, and in Appendix B the programme of the Madras Hindu Association and the speeches delivered at its inaugural meeting held on the 1st of January, 1904 in the Victoria Town Hall Madras. These, we hope, will prove instructive in pointing out the direction in which practical steps may well be taken for encouraging the advancement of Hindu Society. We shall feel amply rewarded if this publication is found to be of some use, as a corrective against certain tendencies leading to social inharmony and disruption, and as an aid to our educated countrymen in enabling them to work together in *concord* for the true advancement of the country

N. SUBBARAU.

HINDU SOCIAL PROGRESS

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WHAT INDIAN PROGRESS AIMS AT.

(By Prof. M RANGACHARIA, M A.)

THE modern contact of European civilization with the pacific and self-contained civilization of India, and the opening up of the world to all mankind by the slow disappearance of all barriers of separation between human communities and civilizations, have brought about in India a condition of affairs which naturally calls for a readjustment of the traditional plan of Hindu life. Side by side with the acquisition of peace and the establishment of political efficiency through the aid of the British, there has been going on in India a slow disruption of her social organization and a steady weakening of social authority, so that Hindu society now seems to be aimlessly drifting along in the confluent stream of the two civilizations of the East and the West. It will at once be granted that it is not wise to allow this drifting to go on for any great length of time, without providing the needed guidance to society and civilization, for assuredly such a drifting cannot take us to anything like a safe haven of blessedness, peace and illumination. Already the inconvenience arising from this long felt want of adjustment between the two civilizations is giving rise to unwholesome symptoms of unrest, and is creating in some quarters an undesirable tendency in favour of social and other forms of lawlessness, thereby producing much unnecessary and at the same time avoidable misery and pain in the life of the people. It therefore behoves all, who have the interest of the country and its civilization at heart, to bestow the most careful attention on the present critical situation of affairs, and direct their best thoughts to the planning out of the ways and means needed

for the safe guidance of Hindu society along the path of true and orderly progress Mere tinkering with social institutions and random rebellion against social authority, without understanding their internal meaning and natural correlations, and without endeavouring to examine the root principles out of which they have grown, are calculated more to injure true progress than produce any enduring benefit to society either now or in the future. Questions relating to marriage, caste organization, foreign travel, education, religious worship and many other such things are already demanding attention and awaiting solution. How in all these matters the mingled stream of the old and new social forces is to be guided so as to make it flow along such channels as will surely contribute to national prosperity is a work of momentous importance. And this work cannot be long neglected without the risk of much serious danger and disaster Where indifference is so highly harmful, wrong or unsuited action is indeed even more injurious.

Accordingly, with the object of earnestly studying and discussing all these social and other problems relating to the historic life of India and to its continuance along a path of ever-widening enlightenment, the *Indian Progress* has *been started. It is intended to seek and obtain help and* guidance from every quarter to ascertain how best the work of social and religious re adjustment may be made easy, smooth and wise, so that nothing is done in ignorance or in haste. The endeavour will be, first, to understand the meaning and power of the institutions of Hindu civilization, next, to find out wherein they are defective and unsuited to the times, and how they may all be rectified, and lastly, to encourage the growth of such new institutions and organizations as may from time to time be required to ensure popular progress and national greatness in the future. Believing that, as in the case of individuals, so

also in the case of communities, all enduring progress results from the natural process of evolutional self-development, we mean to urge in our columns the importance of that kind of National Education which is calculated to make Indian civilisation conscious of its own life and strength and capable of coming up fully to the highest ideal of a world embracing cosmopolitanism. Indeed, education is everywhere the most powerful agent of Progress and Reform; and without national schools and academies which aim at the making of Indian manhood and at India's national self-development and the expansion of her thought and life, it is next to impossible to achieve any progress. We therefore feel that this new journalistic undertaking may prove of some use, not only to the student of Hindu civilization and its underlying sociological principles, but also to the practical patriot and philanthropist who wishes to engage himself in the work of social amelioration and national regeneration. We are conscious that the task we have thus undertaken is full of high responsibilities; but we are hopeful that, with the blessing of God and the earnest co-operation and support of all our enlightened countrymen, we may be enabled to bear that heavy burden of responsibility to the lasting advantage of India's true progress and increasing prosperity.

PROGRESS.

(By Prof M RANGACHARIAR M A.)

WHAT is progress is a question of great importance, and all those who wish to work for the good of India cannot bestow too much attention on what constitutes the foundation of true progress. In the language of the science of politics, the term *progress* is often distinguished from *order*. While the latter means the uninjured and continued maintenance of all existing healthy and helpful conditions in society so as to make it good and happy, the former is understood to signify the acquisition of new more and more advantageous conditions of life, so as to increase steadily the fund of goodness and happiness already possessed by any well regulated human community. The expression *yogakshema* so well known in the Sanskrit language signifies both these ideas, *yoga* meaning *progress* and *kshema* meaning *order*. A point which is well worthy of note in this connection, is that in the Sanskrit expression the idea of progress is placed before the idea of order, obviously implying thereby that without the endeavour to advance and improve the goodness and happiness of human societies, the conservation of whatever is good in them becomes impossible. The spirit of absolute conservatism is really nothing more than the advocacy of what may be called the policy of standing still; and standing still is an altogether impossible task in the battle-field of human civilisation. The more stubborn the endeavour to stand still is, the surer is the tendency to retrogression. Accordingly a society that does not progress is inevitably doomed to retrograde; and it is herein that we see how even for the maintenance of *order* or *kshema*, the striving after *progress* or *yoga* is urgently necessary. In the evolution of social

as of individual organisms, all life implies movement and change; and when perforce the natural process of evolution is in any way arrested, what follows is invariably decay and death. However, we should be on our guard not to mistake all kinds of change and movement to be indicative of healthy life and vigorous vitality. It is not at all easy to inspire what may be called the common mind of any large human society with a strong and telling desire to alter the conditions of its general life and to improve the nature of its material and moral environments. But even when we have secured the full force of a conscious corporate will to work in the line of change and new adjustment, it is undoubtedly a matter of immense importance to make sure that the force of such a will is producing a more or less certain movement in the direction of a really desirable goal. Otherwise the endeavour to accomplish progress may lead to the attainment of what is indeed far from progress.

In so far as human communities are concerned, it seems to be held by many that progress means the acquisition of increased and increasing efficiency in respect of the inter-communal struggle for existence which is going on everywhere in accordance with the ordered plan of nature. While it is perfectly true that there is a struggle for existence, to which communities are as much subject as individuals, it is by no means certain that the chief end of civilisation consists in enabling human communities to succeed unfailingly in this struggle against similarly rival communities, as well as against misunderstood and unpropitious physical surroundings. Such a view of progress has been very aptly characterised by the late Professor Huxley as being based on what he called the gladiatorial theory of existence. In the passage of human communities from barbarism to enlightenment, this competitive theory of existence soon ceases to be of value, simply for the reason that man does not live by bread alone, nor even by the

accumulation and availability of pleasure, and of the means of enjoying it without let or hindrance. In the survey of the march of human civilisation, that which strikes prominently all observant students of history is the gradual expansion of the liberty of the individual, as the higher stages of the currency are reached; and it is in proportion to the growth of this freedom of the individual that political, social, religious, moral, and even industrial betterment is achieved in all organised human communities. Even as no individual can be free who is not endowed with the fitness to be free, even so no community which is not fit to be free can derive advantage from such political, social and other institutions as are based on the valid assumption of individual liberty. It is a wrong conception of individual freedom which maintains that men and women are, as a matter of right, at liberty to seek and obtain the largest amount of pleasure and convenience for themselves, it being however provided that this largest amount of individual advantage in the case of any person does not accrue from the exploitation of the pleasure and convenience that similarly belong to others. The saying that he who does not know how to obey has not as yet learnt how to command, is indeed a very trite one; nevertheless it contains an important element of truth, which it is dangerous to lose sight of, when we are dealing with the question of human progress and individual freedom. The true meaning of the saying is, that the power of exercising authority appropriately is in vital association with the power of rendering obedience not only to commands and laws, the violation whereof carries sure and immediate penalties in its train, but also to a cultivated sense of duty and the dictates of an enlightened conscience. Similarly, the truly free man is not that person who has an unrestrained scope to do as he likes in enjoying the pleasures of the life and the social status that are somehow his [illegible] on the

other hand such a person is only that man whose power of self restraint is always strong enough to enable him easily to overcome the fascinations of pleasure and the temptations of *moral weakness. Nay, more; in addition to this* unbending power of self restraint, he must always be in living sympathy with his suffering and less fortunate brethren so as to sacrifice without a murmur whatever is needed from his belongings to strengthen the unfortunate weak and to soften the inevitable asperities of their ill ordered or ill endowed lives.

Thus it is the morally strong man alone who is fit to be free It does not require much insight to see that the absence of this kind of moral strength leads to the degeneration of liberty into license, thereby making it appear that the good of life is invariably achieved by a more or less successful rebellion against all restraint *and all social and* religious discipline The drudgery of discipline is necessarily painful in all regimes of restraint; and even the most equitable ones among them cannot be absolutely free from all imputations of injustice and undeserved hardship. To break loose from all discipline on this account is surely the most unsafe and unreasonable way of endeavouring to *accomplish individual or social progress. Without enough* of that discipline of self-restraint and even asceticism, which is encouraged and fostered by religion, and by which alone individual men as well as human communities can acquire their fitness to enjoy the high privilege of freedom, it is absurd even to dream of effecting the progress of civilisation and the advancement of human happiness The modern democratic ideals of human liberty, which are mainly derived from the political history of certain European countries, have a very natural tendency to consecrate mere personal rebellion so as to raise it to the rank of moral heroism. Indeed there is often much heroism in patient suffering and long continued waiting in breaking

away from all moorings for the purpose of enjoying the self centred blessing of drifting, if not for any less worthy purpose In judging of political institutions we hold that they are good when they deal out the maximum of justice that is compatible with present conditions, and are so directed as to produce slowly it may be but surely a growing capacity to deserve and to acquire freedom and all the privileges of a self controlling exercise of authority It goes without saying that social and religious institutions are also to be judged in a similar manner. It is indeed very misleading to judge their efficacy and suitability by the standard of political independence or by that of industrial and commercial hegemony; for, it is possible that, where there is political independence as well as commercial and industrial hegemony, there may at the same time be a tendency to such self-assertion as is inevitably calculated to give rise to the decay of the higher humane and ethical elements of civilisation In the history of almost all ancient civilisations we have known of periods wherein all the glory of physical strength and of material prosperity has not been able to sustain their strength and purity and beneficence, as against the simultaneously operating influences of a corroding moral and religious weakness. We may even go further and say that instances are not unknown in history wherein unrivalled political power and material prosperity have themselves acted as causes of moral decadence Therefore the true relation between the material aspect and the moral aspect of civilisation is not certainly such as to make the excellence of the former a means of measuring the excellence of the latter, even though it has to be granted that these two aspects of human civilisation cannot be said to be wholly unrelated to each other. The truth is, that it is the divine influence of a wide spread moral enthusiasm among a people, that has always inspired their general progress, of which their material prosperity

and political well being form only a part. The soul of man is the undoubted centre of the evolution of human civilisation, and it is in the unsullied purity and growing strength of the manifested power of that soul that we have the means of establishing human happiness and advancing true civilisation.

It is thus the elevating influence of a wide-spread moral enthusiasm that has everywhere made human communities endeavour to deserve freedom and to march on along the road of progress. No great movement in history has ever succeeded without the benefit of the moral leverage of popular sympathy and support, and no people have ever achieved anything great either for themselves or for others, without the impulse of an instinctively strong sense of unity in respect of their civilisation, and without an assured knowledge and an unbounded faith that the aim of that civilisation is peace, purity and blessedness. The struggle for bread and for wealth fosters selfishness, and leads men to put their trust in the gospel of pleasure and of personal convenience. The very selfishness of such a struggle takes away from it the power of producing any generous and extensive moral enthusiasm, and it is for this reason that the gladiatorial theory of existence is seen to be injuriously incomplete. Popular enthusiasm energised and spread abroad by the force of faith and moral conviction alone the propeller of true progress in the evolution of human societies; and when, in the wake of the progress so started, material prosperity and an expanded scope for the enjoyment of pleasure and physical comfort follow as they naturally have to do, then an exuberant love of luxury, a deceitful sense of security and a spirit of commercial covetousness begin gradually to throttle, under the weight of an over-abundant growth of tempting wealth and defiant nonchalance, the higher influences of faith and morality, so as to cause the disruption of a whole civilisation.

Moral enthusiasm is everywhere the mother of progress, while material prosperity is only an associate thereof destined to serve this queen of progress generally in the capacity of a maid in attendance; and whensoever or wheresoever the maid is mistaken for the queen, the doom of an irreparable catastrophe becomes unavoidable as a matter of course. Let us beware in time not to catch too much the infection of modern Western secularism; and let it be ever our endeavour to check as much as it lies in our power the spreading of this infection, which necessarily brings with it the curse of a soul ignoring materialism that is throughout darkly pervaded by God ignoring irreverence. In all the effective battles of civilisation, selfishness, sensuality and secularism ought to have no place under the enchanting banner of progress, in as much as this mischievous triad of unwholesome qualities is decidedly inimical to the development of the power of self-restraint and self culture. The common changes in custom and conduct, that are brought about in religion, politics and social life by that sense of convenience which is compelled by the inventive power of necessity, may make the path of progress less rugged and less thorny; but they are in themselves incapable of making any large human community generate to the goal in the journey of civilisation and self realisation. We may call them by the name of reform, and endeavour to bring them under the category of progress; but necessity which, as the mother of inventions, forces changes in custom and in conduct is incapable of inspiring the heart of any large human society with an enthusiasm for self-elevation and sublime philanthropy. The aim of convenience can never be anything more than to correct the superficial incidence of pain, and as such it is apt to glorify the avoidance of pain as one of the chief ends of social and individual life. There is no doubt that the pain of avoidable evils ought to be fought against and

minimised ; but that other pain which forms the accompaniment of the higher life of continence and culture has to be welcomed as the most effective chastener of man's earthly existence. The fund of goodness and happiness which is possessed by any community of men and women can, accordingly be increased only by making that community and the members thereof more and more fit for the enjoyment of that freedom which spontaneously abhors selfishness and sensuality and rests firmly on the immovable rock of self-restraint played on and beautified by the light of generous love and benignant sympathy. Hunger is a bad enough enemy of man; and let us by all means seek and win bread, so as to weaken the fatal power of hunger as against its innocent victims. But let us also remember, if we wish to progress, that man does not live by bread alone and that he has a soul which is akin to God, and which can, if well used, shatter mountains of misery and injustice into dust heaps and scatter them to the winds, while it is at the same time singing in joyous strains the hallelujah of the divine victory of humanity over animality, of civilisation over barbarism of freedom over tyranny, that is, of the victory of righteousness over sin and of virtue over vice.

HINDU SOCIAL REFORM ON NATIONAL LINES.

By Prof M RANGACHARIAR

Of late there has been a growing feeling in South India that during the last few years the movement in favour of Hindu social reform and progress has been going on along clearly inappropriate lines, as to make that movement itself unpopular with a large number of our countrymen of light and leading, whose patriotic interest in the progress of Hindu national life is unquestionably earnest and sincere. Without entering into a discussion of the causes which have produced this result it may safely be affirmed that it is in every way desirable to ascertain if anything may be done to really popularise the movement in favour of Hindu social advancement so that the adjustment of the traditional regulations of Hindu society to our modern conditions of life and thought may thereby be more rapidly and more easily brought about. For this purpose an association of Hindu gentlemen who are interested in the cause of Hindu social advancement on truly national lines may well be organised and set to do its work under the name of the *Madras Hindu National Association* or any other suitable name. The line along which such an association has to be worked is determined by the fact that the association has to serve as a means to make the movement in favour of Hindu social progress really national in character; and this seems to be possible only when our

existing centres of religious and social authority are neither altogether ignored nor unnecessarily provoked to adopt an attitude of opposition in relation to any of the requisite changes of a really wholesome character in the social and religious habits and customs of our people. The importance of associating these centres of authority with our modern endeavours to promote social advancement has as yet never received adequate recognition; nor has any sustained effort to evoke their sympathy and secure their co-operation been hitherto put forth in anything like a successful manner. Social reform on national lines closely corresponds to political reform on constitutional lines; and in both of these the endeavour after progress and improvement has always to be in conformity with whatever happens to be the properly constituted and generally recognised centre and source of authority. Thus the conciliation and the education of Hindu orthodoxy, so as to make it sympathise spontaneously with our modern aspirations after social improvement becomes naturally the most important part of the work which this association has to undertake and perform. In addition to this, the association will also have to direct its attention to the equally important work of attuning the mind of our modern English educated young men to the beneficent achievements and progressive tendencies of Hindu civilisation and to its collected store of age-long experience and time-tested wisdom. Nothing tends to disable and disorganise the institutions of a civilisation so much as want of light on the part of its accredited custodians, and want of faith on the part of those who have to shape their lives in accordance with its ideals and institutions. Two means may

well be adopted to liberalise and enlighten Hindu orthodoxy as it now is The first is to bring into existence certain educational institutions to train a new class of advanced *pandits*, priests and preachers so that they may all be filled with the new aspiration after social progress and be thus stirred to put forth patriotic effort for accomplishing the vast transformation that may from time to time be required in the regulations relating to our corporate social life If funds become available for such a purpose it cannot be hard to take care of the details connected with the working of such institutions so as to make them yield the results that may properly be expected from them The other means is to arrange for the holding of conferences of *pundits* and English-educated gentlemen from time to time at different centres of population in South India, so that there may thus be a free and easy exchange of ideas between the new and the old spheres of thought and influence in our society Sympathy gives rise to sympathy and indeed there has been no greater reconciler known to history than the magic power of love If Hindu orthodoxy now opposes the reforms proposed by our modern men in relation to our social and religious observances, the best thing in the truest interest of society is not to break with such an orthodoxy at once and cut ourselves adrift from the soothing bond of social authority There are of course some whose object in life is to disorganise Hindu civilisation, so that they may, if possible, reap their cherished investigation of such a disorganisation These may discredit the authority of Hindu orthodoxy and encourage others to do likewise. But it is hard to see how those, who, on the other hand, aim at making the organisation

of Hindu civilisation more efficient and increasingly capable of improvement can safely and consistently adopt such a policy. In politics we do not so readily rebel against the authority, which is responsible for the existing conditions, in order to seek and obtain what to some of us individually or collectively appears to be better conditions to live in It may be said that we do not so brea away here from authority because we cannot do so even if we will, and because also such a limitation imposed upon our power and freedom in this matter is conducive to the ever needed maintenance of order Is it then in politics alone that we are to attend to the maintenance of peace, even when we are most ardently striving for progress? Order is the first essential of progress quite as much in social and religious matters as in political affairs Understanding in this light the need that there is for the conciliation and enlightenment of Hindu orthodoxy, we may readily enough see how an improved public opinion on religious and social matters among the orthodox *pandits* and priests themselves will prove considerably helpful in inducing our *swamis mathadhipatis* and others, who even now wield much social and religious authority, to become favourably inclined to all such reforms as do not clash with the fundamental principles of Hindu religious life and thought.

To some it may appear that this process of constitutional reform is almost impossible, inasmuch as the authority of all Hindu religious and social institutions is, as they sometimes express, so stubbornly conservative as to be incapable of helping on progress in any manner whatsoever. It is needless to say that this

opinion is neither borne out by the history of Hindu society nor by the contents of the authoritative scriptures of the Hindus wherein their social and religious regulations are to be found To understand the rationality of the *Sastras* and the manner in which provision is made in them to change many of the regulations confirmed in them in accordance with altered conditions of time, place and circumstances it is absolutely necessary to study them in a spirit of sympathy and appreciation And when they are so studied, it will distinctly become evident that they cannot in themselves prove obstacles in the way of true progress By modifying such regulations as require to be modified, in the manner in which the *Sastras* themselves allow them to be so modified we may certainly accomplish almost all the social changes that we consider it right to advocate in the present altered circumstances of our country Indeed some of the changes that may be so advocated by us are really in the direction of making the practical life of society accordance with the *Sastras* than it does now We may succeed in introducing these changes into our society by merely insisting on the commonly accepted principle of conduct in such cases namely, that the authority of the *Sastras* is always stronger than the authority of custom In adopting this method of accomplishing reform the great advantage is that our striving after progress becomes notably national, and nothing is done in the name of progress so as to weaken the existing social authority or to disorganise the prevailing social unity. Expediency, when it does not concern particular individuals alone, is another name for social convenience and comfort; and understood in this

ence, it points out to us the direction in which either custom or law is to be modified for the purpose of achieving social advancement. But it is an efficiently organised legislature alone the authority whereof is derived from the traditional continuity of its existence and from its actual and widely recognised possession of the needed power that can take note of all the requisite changes which expediency points to, and modify accordingly the existing social regulations without at the same time losing sight of the ideal towards which the march of progress is to be stimulated and sustained. There is no denying that owing to well-known historical causes, the authority of what happens to be the social and religious legislature of Hindu society has become considerably disabled and inefficient. But this surely cannot be made an excuse to work for its complete disruption, as long as by social reform we do not mean the production of a state of social anarchy in which every man is free to do, and does, what he likes, provided that he does not thereby run counter to existing political laws and regulations. Thus expediency cannot be more than a mere tentative path-finder in this matter; and since it is a well ascertained lesson of history that the actual march of progress in constant association with the sustaining light of peace has inevitably to be accomplished under the banner of a well-aimed and properly constituted authority, our sense of expediency alone cannot, when it is unassisted by the clear sanction of high moral and religious ideals, propel the onwardness of the march to the goal of progressive advancement. These considerations ought to be enough to show the inadequacy of individual reason and conviction alone to achieve peaceful and

continued social progress The help of a properly constituted social authority is also absolutely required in the situation Thus the study of the *Sastras* is calculated to be immensely helpful in teaching us the way in which it is proper as well as advantageous to put our best to work for true social progress These among us who are English-educated see the expediency of the required social changes more than they understand the mechanism of the social authority which is based on the *Sastras* Similarly our *pandits* and priests appreciate the authoritativeness of the *Sastras* more than the scope they give for changes in the direction of improvement Accordingly a careful and critical study of the *Sastras* with a view to utilise them as the foundation of all our future social legislation so to put it, is both *desirable and necessary* Such a study will enable the English educated Hindu, who as a patriot, wishes to work for social progress, to understand the great value and inevitableness of social authority; and it will further lead him to do his patriotic work on really constitutional that is on national lines It will also give him the power to meet the *pandits* and the priests in sympathy and on their own platform, and when he in this manner finds his way on their platform it cannot be long before he succeeds in endowing what is sometimes derisively called blind orthodoxy with a power of seeing and doing which may well surpass the rosiest of our dreams.

One other point to which the attention of the new association has to be directed is the elevation of the lower classes. This has of course to be done by causing the spread of religious and secular knowledge

and enlightenment among them. The idea that the *Sastras* are against this kind of work is also based on misconception The history of the growth of the Indian Vernacular Literatures itself happens to be a protest against such a misconception. Over and over again it declared in the literature bearing upon the Vedantic religion of the Hindus that all classes and castes are equally entitled to receive religious instruction and secular enlightenment. The injunction that the Vedas should not be taught to those who are not *Dwijas*, that is, to certain Non-Aryan Hindus of India, applies only to what is known as the *mantra* portion of the Vedas; and seeing that the Vedic religion of sacrifices is almost completely superseded in the life of the Hindu people by the Vedantic religion of devotion, self-conquest and self realisation the exclusion of certain communities from the traditional way of learning the Vedas cannot be considered to be any serious religious disability imposed upon the lower classes in India. As a matter of fact Sankara Ramanuja and Madhva, the three famous expounders of the Vedantic philosophy and religion in South India have all taught and acted on the belief that the lower classes are quite as much entitled to the moral and spiritual benefit that is to be derived from the Vedanta as the higher classes are. In justification of their views on this subject, as well as in justification of the really progressive character of the religious side of Hindu civilisation, almost all the sectarian divisions of our Vedantic religion and thought can even to-day point to great Non-Aryan saints and devotees of humble caste-status, who are universally held in high honour as worthy teachers and as exemplars of that noble life of love and devotion to God, which

the Vedanta expounds for the blissful and eternal enfranchisement of the soul of man as man It is known that, in so far as the injunctions contained in their religious works of authority are concerned, the Tengalai Sri-Vaishnavas have the elevation and enlightenment of the lower classes imposed upon them as a religious duty That they do not now do what they are commanded to do in the manner in which they ought to do it, is certainly not enough reason to say that the *Sastras*, taken as solemn authoritative guides, stand in the way of our working for the improvement of our lower classes Here is a field of beneficent work the magnitude of which is realised by few among our educated men. Nor are they aware of the great danger which the neglect of this duty on their part is sure to give rise to in the coming years. This work of elevating and enlightening the lower classes is also certainly possible of accomplishment now as it has been to some extent in the past, without doing any violence to the *Sastras* and to social authority, and the advantage in our doing this work in this constitutional manner consists in the continued maintenance of our social solidarity and of the feeling of mutual esteem and confidence between the various sections of the Hindu people Allowing others to do the work that is to be done in this field is sure to produce an unwholesome embitterment of the feelings of the lower classes as against the higher ones in Hindu society. Saivism also is authorised and well able to take part in this momentous work of improving the religious as well as the secular aspect of the life of our lower classes. The immediate step which is to be taken in connection with this work is to create a body

of men, who in laboring for the elevation and enlightenment of the lower classes, will themselves feel that they are thereby obeying one of the most humanitarian teachings of their own religion; and then we have to enlist popular sympathy and support on behalf of such a body of men so as to make them realise that the worthiness of their work is sure to be generously appreciated by their own countrymen. Seeing that both Saivism and Vaishnavism afford scope for this kind of mission-work among our lower classes, it is indeed highly desirable in more ways than one to leave it undone any longer or to keep merely looking on while others do it so as gradually to undermine the unity of Hindu society.

Four items of work thus appear to be now essential for the accomplishment of peaceful social progress among us on really national lines. They are:—(1) the education of Hindu orthodoxy so as to make its spirit liberal and progressive care being taken that such education in no way tends to weaken what may be called its clerical or ecclesiastical authority in religious and social matters; (2) the organisation of Hindu religious and social conferences wherein Hindu orthodoxy may be brought in close contact with the aims and aspirations of English-educated patriots among us, so that between it and those who, under the influence of modern thought and conditions of life, feel impelled to strive for social advancement a proper understanding may come into existence, tending to evoke mutual respect and sympathy and confidence in all their relations with one another; (3) the diffusion of a correct knowledge and appreciation of all the worthy and valuable results achieved by Hindu

civilisation in history, among our English-educated brethren who are naturally apt to judge those results frequently from the historically unconnected and therefore unrelated standpoint of modern European democracy, as also from that of the aggressive and hence of course not impartial Christian criticism; (1) and lastly the direct and maintenance of a body of Hindu missionary workers to labour among our lower classes so that by their missionary work, which is in full accordance with the tenets of Hinduism as followed by them, the elevation and enlightenment of the lower classes may take place in complete harmony with that wonderful principle of unity in variety on which the whole fabric of Hindu society and civilisation has been built up. It cannot be very difficult to see that all these four kinds of endeavour if successfully carried out are capable of producing much good in the way of helping on Hindu social advancement, although every one of them except perhaps the last partakes of the character of an indirect means to achieve the end in view. That these indirect measures are certainly of great value may be learnt by us by at least observing the operations of the *Christian missionaries in India*. Their final object is, as they make it plain enough, the Christianisation of India, that is, to make every man and woman in India accept the religion of Christ as the only true and saving religion in the world. Towards this end they are seen to adopt the indirect means of imparting secular education to Indian youths, quite as much as the direct means of Christian conversion. Indeed the wisest and the most far-seeing among them are known to have declared that their faith in the efficacy of

he indirect means ■ much greater than in that of the direct means It is not alone in modern military warfare that direct frontal attacks are considered to be more calculated to produce failure than success In our days the religious aggression of one civilisation as against another is also seen to adopt readily and with advantage more than one indirect method of operation, rightly believing in the need as well as the utility of the preparatory discipline and of cleverly conceived tactics before getting ready to win and to proclaim victory Is it only in respect of the operations connected with the accomplishment of social improvement, by working from within the community itself, that no indirect endeavour to prepare the community to be fit for, and be worthy of, such improvement is necessary? Surely persuasion and preparation have not as yet ceased to be of value in the internal economy of Hindu society and its ordered life of unity in variety. It is, however distinctly clear that in this plan of campaign wherein much reliance is to be placed on persuasion and preparation and wherein everything that is done is done constitutionally and with the co operation of, as well as with due deference to, whatever happens to be the neutralising seat of social and religious authority no place can be appropriately assigned to those who are not Hindus by birth as well as by religion and conviction. In fact all those who have no faith in the saving efficacy of Hindu religion, and are not unprepared to surrender their adherence to the fundamental tenets of that religion, can never be safely entrusted with the privilege of pioneering the way of Hindu social advancement. The man who is ■ Hindu

by birth alone but not by religion also, has no respect naturally for what constitutes the traditional authority of the very society which he wants to improve. For this reason he becomes unfit for all kinds of constitutional work on behalf of social progress and reform among us. Thus those who are Hindus only by birth and parentage and are not Hindus in religion also cannot be expected to look with favour upon the national and constitutional plan of campaign in the matter of accomplishing the social progress of the Hindu people. If we bear in mind some of the dominant tendencies of modern English education in our midst it believes all of us, who have the real welfare and progress of the Hindu nation and of their ancient civilization at heart, to bestir ourselves in time and to see that the cause of our national social advancement is not betrayed either through unsympathetic irreverence or through the rashness of that unhappy disaffection which is ever only too ready to revolt against all social and religious authority.

This advocacy of the indirect plan of constitutional persuasion and preparation in so far as it relates to the work of accomplishing the social progress of the Hindus, so that their corporate social life may thereby be well adjusted to its new and altered environments, does not mean that there is nothing to be done in this affair in a straightforward and direct manner. If, in a large area of land which is to be cultivated for a plentiful growth of, say, wheat or cotton, there are strips here and there *on which other kinds of crop are seen to be ripe and* ready for the sickle even before the large area is all well ploughed and manured, it cannot be anything less than folly not to harvest the ripe crops on the small strips of land, till the wheat or cotton grown on

the more extensive and continuous men is also fit to be harvested. There are indeed some items in what may fairly be taken to be the programme of our newly needed social reform, which are capable of being carried out practically by certain really worthy individuals without much previous preparatory work in relation to the life of society as a whole. Which item of Hindu social reform as this is fit for immediate accomplishment, and which is not may partly be learnt from the intensity of popular opposition which any particular proposal for reform may possibly give rise to, and partly also from ascertaining how far the *Sastras* are, or are not in favour of the proposed reforms. Among the reforms which are now generally advocated there are some which are emphatically against the *Sastras* as they are at present understood and applied to our social life; there are some others which, while not being opposed to the *Sastras*, are against existing custom and the traditional sentiment of the people; and again there are some others which, while being favoured by the *Sastras*, are against the customary practice of the community. Naturally those reforms which come under the first of the above classes are the most difficult ones to be immediately dealt with. Those which belong to the second of the above classes, have it is true, the advantage of not being opposed to the *Sastras*; but their not having the positive support of the *Sastras* is a disadvantage in relation to them, in so far as the required overpowering of the authority of custom is concerned. In respect of both these classes of reforms there has to be either a fresh and authoritative *Sastraic* legislation or a fresh and authoritative *Sastraic* interpretation. In the case of the third class of reforms, success may well enough

be attained by endeavouring to enforce the *Sastraic* rule that the authority of the *Sastras* is always stronger than the authority of custom, and that when these are in conflict with each other, the latter must yield to the former. Obviously this last class of reforms seems to be the least difficult of accomplishment, when we take in consideration merely their relation to the *Sastras*. However, it has to be borne in mind that this gradation of *Sastraic* difficulty does not strictly correspond to the proportion of popular opposition which these various classes of reforms are capable of rousing. Men's ignorance of the contents of the *Sastras* the feeling of ease and the sense of safety which are instinctively associated with unquestioning dependence upon custom, and the very natural fear of change that it may after all be from bad to worse, are some of the causes which are responsible for this disproportion between *Sastraic* objectionableness and popular opposition in relation to any proposed reform.

With this keenness of vision, which is the result of her sympathy with the national life of the Hindus and their historic civilisation Mrs Annie Besant, though born and brought up under the influences of a civilisation very different from our own, seems to have obtained a better grasp of our social situation and of the great need that there is both for direct and indirect work therein for helping on our social improvement, than all our own iconoclastic countrymen of the modern radical type. The Central Hindu College at Benares and the Samskrita Pathasala associated with it are educational institutions of a special value in this connection; the former of these is intended to attune the mind and heart of the English-educated

Hindu to appreciate the many merits of Hindu national life and civilisation, while the latter serves *the purpose of liberalising the pandit and the priest*, so as to make them also be really serviceable in the cause of an all-round advancement of the Hindu people in their future march of history. These two institutions have already begun to do the kind of indirect educational work which, many more like them have to do in our midst, in order that the social progress of the Hindus in India may thus become really well assured. When educational institutions having these objects in view spring up [redacted] requited over the whole country and do their work of discipline and teaching in all the variety of ways in which it [redacted] possible to do it, then surely will [redacted] new spirit dawn upon the social life of the Hindus and make them move on steadily in the direction of an ever increasing progress. And the items of direct and immediate work for social progress, *which according to Mrs Besant may at once be* taken up by enlightened and patriotic individuals in Hindu society are: (1) the raising of the age of betrothal and of marriage both as affecting our sons and our daughters; (2) the maintenance of caste relations with those who have travelled abroad, provided they continue to be Hindus in religion and conform to Hindu ways of living; (3) the promotion, as far as possible, of intermarriage and *interdining between the various subdivisions of the* four widely recognised castes; (4) discouraging, as far as possible, illiterate and immoral priests; (5) the education of our girls [redacted] well as of our young women in agreement with the national life and religious aspirations of the Hindus; and (6) the prohibition of the acceptance

of any money consideration by the parents of the girls as well as of the boys that are united together as husband and wife in the Hindu religious ceremony of betrothal. In the history of the modern movement of Hindu social reform, none of these items happens to be anything really new. Indeed these and other items of reform have for many years been advocated by more than one Indian reformer in more than one part of India. What Mrs Besant has done is simply that she has picked up some of the most easily achievable reforms for immediate and direct accomplishment. It is evident that the endeavour to effect these selected reforms in the life of Hindu society is fairly free from the possibility of placing the reformer in a position of pronounced antagonism to those for whose common social improvement such work is mainly undertaken by him. Even in connection with these peaceful reforms silent work is always preferable to the noisy assertion of the right of the individual's conviction or will or pleasure; and those who have worked in silence know well the great value of not provoking unnecessary and avoidable opposition in matters like these. The successful carrying out of even these largely unobjectionable reforms does not generally depend anywhere upon the will of any one potent individual; it is often seen that the trend of the mind of more than one family, the ladies whereof are no negligible factors at all in the problem determines the success or otherwise of all such endeavours after reform. Therefore any failure that may be noticed on the part of a man, who, however, wishes sincerely to do well his duty in regard to this matter of social improvement, ought not to lead [redacted] to censure him at once and to proclaim his

failure to the whole world How far he is, in his striving for social reform, entitled to bring trouble upon, or cause pain to, others is ■ aspect of the question which ought to be never away from our minds. Our title to serve is the foundation of our title to sacrifice what is undeniably recognised to be distinctly and entirely our own ; but even this noble title of service does not in the least empower us to betray or in any way endanger the immediate or prospective interests of others, howsoever close their relation to us may be. Mutual charity and helpfulness ought to be, therefore, the dominant features in our mental attitude towards all our brethren, who are working with more or less success for the achievement of the same common end of effecting the true social advancement of the Hindu people The harsh tongue and the fault-finding mind when they work ■ as to mar the smooth and symmetrical beauty of national self-consciousness and unified popular life, are known in history to be fit only for sowing the wind, so that the whirlwind might certainly be reaped in due time. Those who work, even though it may be with the noblest of motives, to cause social unrest and disaffection among the millions, who inhabit this ancient land are sure to take away from them their great comfort of contentment ■ also the peace and happiness of ■ fairly co-ordinated popular life. The great historic immorality of sowing the seeds of revolution among ■ peace-loving and contented people can in no way become diminished, owing to the consideration that their sowing is sincerely done in what is honestly conceived to be the interest of progress. Heedless irreverence towards all constituted authority and aggressive self-assertion are invariably ■■ to be

the result of the strongly individualistic processes of achieving social or religious or any other kind of progress. Such irreverence and self-assertion are very undesirable assets to be allowed to accumulate in the history of any people or nation, which is anxious to work out its God-appointed destiny in peace and in love. And when the spirit of rash irreverence and egotistic self-assertion takes root among a large number of individuals in any community, it is really impossible to know what power on earth will be able to impose any limitation on the general tendency of such a spirit to engender anarchy; and restless revolution. It is easy enough to sow the wind but which of us can exactly prognosticate the nature of the coming whirlwind? What will it destroy, and what will it leave undestroyed? O let us think of this in sober earnest and solemn silence, and endeavour prayerfully, with all the strength and strenuousness we can command, to prevent the formation and the destructive sweep of such an undesirable whirlwind. May Heaven help us to do our duty aright in these troublous times of internal inharmony and external antagonism in our social history!

THE AIMS OF HINDU SOCIAL LIFE.

(By Mr ■ RAMANUJACHARIAR M. A)

THE present epoch in the history of Indian society is ■ critical period in which the thoughts of the people are being subjected to ■ process of transformation under the influence of a new set of ideas brought in by an alien civilisation. Since her contact with Western nations India has been the theatre of ■■ ever increasing struggle between two radically different civilisations, the old and the new the indigenous and the foreign. The old civilisation, whose origin dates thousands of years back in the dark mists of pre-historic antiquity represents the growth of ■ long process of evolution, and has become solidly concretised in the social, religious, and ethical institutions of the Indian people The permanent ideas which characterise it have become rooted in the essential nature of the people and form, so to speak, the very soul of the social organism. It is these ideas which determine and guide surely, though unconsciously, the lives and actions of the vast millions of the Indian people.

The new civilisation of the West which, with its imposing grandeur and power, is trying to displace the old is a creation of the new conditions of life and thought necessitated by the recent advancements in science, art and commerce. The social, ethical and political ideals of this latest phase of European civilisation ■■ now being tried and tested in European countries, it is said, with some measure of ■■■ And social philosophers

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are not wanting who declare that the social experiment which is conducted in accordance with these ideals is leading to certain failure, and that the evil thereof far outweighs the good. The struggle to establish this new order of things which has had its origin in Europe, has now spread even to all such remote countries as have come more or less under European control and influence. In India the struggle is becoming keener every day, as our relations with European countries and peoples are becoming more and more intimate. Every one who is at least familiar with the fundamental principles of sociological science knows that from such a conflict there can only arise but one issue It is impossible to preserve the old ideas intact and reject the new ones altogether; nor is it possible to adopt the new ones in their entirety Any attempt either in the one or in the other of these directions is sure to meet with failure and disappointment. History shows that in every conflict between two civilisations, the result has always been something which is neither the one nor the other, but a harmonious fusion or combination of the adjustable elements of both. Social reformers cannot alter this issue; but they can, with the help of their wisdom and foresight clear the obstacles in the way of progress and hasten the attainment of the desired harmony. Every Indian Social reformer should, therefore, bear in mind, that our old civilisation cannot possibly be forced to die. It is a hopeless task to seek to accomplish any such thing. The old can only be transformed into the new; in other words, the soul of the old civilisation must be preserved in all its essential nature, and be at the same time imbued with the spirit

of the new, so that in a sense the old becomes the new, and the new becomes the old.

We are, of course aware that the Indian reformer has got an extremely difficult task before him, and one that will take a long time for its accomplishment. The present inelasticity of the Indian social system, the conservative nature of the people, and their apparent unwillingness and even actual resistance to accept any change in their lives so as to adapt them to modern requirements are obstacles in the way causing no little anxiety and vexation to all those who are really interested in and are ardently working for the welfare and advancement of our countrymen But, on that account, to abandon our legitimate work and to cry death to our ancient civilisation and its long cherished institutions sanctified by age and religion, argue not only weakness and cowardice, but also an unfitness for our undertaking the noble task of social regeneration The reformer must understand that no nation whatever, far less a nation with noble traditions and institutions inherited through centuries from a distant past can be made to give up its old ideals and traditions and yet be helped on to live; not all the quickening ideas of a foreign civilisation, which it can neither appreciate nor understand well, as being foreign to its genius, can give it the vitality of true life No intelligent reformer, therefore, will deny that, if India and her civilisation are not to die in the modern struggle but have to advance in the line of progress and to make India take her place among the progressive nations of the world, she should endeavour to retain her old civilisation and its ideals with only such modifications as are necessary to suit her life to the changed

conditions of our modern situation Of course, such of the institutions in the old civilisation, ▬ are positively injurious to the progress of the nation along the natural lines of its evolution and in accordance with the ideas marked out by genius and temperament, will naturally disappear; and new ones adapted to its progress will become incorporated. But to attempt to alter its natural course of evolution or to force it to abandon its own ideals in favour of others which are foreign to its genius is in our opinion, nothing short of sinning against man and God No Indian reformer can afford to overlook the Hindu social ideal and its immense superiority to the European in so far as Indian society is concerned. If we carefully examine and study the growth of the Hindu social organism through its historic centuries under the action of natural evolutionary forces and under the impulse and direction given to it by the ancient Rishis, we see clearly that there is one end it seems to have been intended to subserve, and one ideal towards which it has been growing. The ancient Indian philosophers, we believe, had by their remarkable intuition clearly grasped the nature of man and his destiny as well as of his relation to society. They recognised in man two aspects, ▬ spiritual and permanent, and the other temporal and accidental.

In his superior aspect man is a distinct being apart from the society of which, as a physical organism, he forms ▪ part; and he has therefore an end of his own to live for. That end is the realisation of his highest spiritual nature and all its possibilities; and his physical embodiment is useful to him only in so far as it conduces to that end. But as it ▪ in the midst of society

that he has to realise his spiritual self, he, in common with his fellows, has another end to realise and work for. The individual aim of life is the soul's salvation, and the communal aim is naturally to fit society for the free and easy realisation of that individual aim That is the social ideal the creation of a perfect state of society in which it is best possible for each man to realise the true end of his being. Human society is therefore the sphere of action in which man lives and moves and tries to realise his own ethical and spiritual perfection; and he cannot in any case separate himself from it, but is in duty bound. to work as much as it lies in his power to make it purer and nobler and more adapted to realise this moral and spiritual goal of man But many modern sociological thinkers almost entirely ignore the spiritual aspect of man and the abiding interests of his soul. They think that man has no higher interests to serve and work for in life than his own happiness and the happiness of his fellows, happiness being mostly interpreted to mean the well-being of man's physical personality—his lower nature Some even go so far as to sink the individual in the society, and to teach that he can have no interest apart from the interest of society, as though society can have an interest of its own other than the common interest of those who compose it. Their personal ideal is thus an ideal of pleasure—an ideal of comfort and personal convenience; and their social ideal too is directed towards the same end—a state of society in which all its members may have equal scope and opportunities for enjoying the good things of the world; this is indeed an ideal state which can never be realised in practice so long as the

constitution of man and the world is what it is. One need not deny that freedom, wealth, power and equal opportunities of enjoyment are all desirable ends for men to follow only so long as they are kept in due subordination to, and in harmony with the highest spiritual end of human existence But when they are set up as ends in themselves and are exclusively followed, they surely become harmful to society, the deterioration whereof will then be only a question of time The real ideal, therefore, is not one of personal enjoyment but one of self-sacrifice, of the sacrifice and *subordination of the lower aims of life to the higher* spiritual end of man This ideal of social and individual life, in which physical happiness is subordinated to ethical perfection is the central idea that underlies all the institutions which together constitute the Hindu social organisation and its civilisation — they have been moulded and shaped by the ancient Rishis. The ideal, it is true, is mainly religious and spiritual; and this accounts for that close connection which we find between Hindu religion and Hindu sociology, as also for the tenacity with which the Hindu clings to his social institutions as an essential part of his religion. The Hindu knows no dividing distinction between *what is social* and *what is religious* To him, as to a philosopher, all social matters have some religious significance or other, *direct or indirect*, more intimate or less intimate. The religious spirit pervades the whole Hindu social organisation, and is to be found in every part of it. It is the very atmosphere in which that organisation lives and moves and has its being. Without the light and support of religion the Hindu's social institutions lose their meaning and

will all crumble to pieces in a day. That the central and controlling principle of the whole complex social fabric of the Hindus is this religious idea, any body may easily satisfy himself even by a casual observation. The division of society into castes not according to wealth or titled dignity but according to moral fitness, the restraint due to caste-discipline, with separate professions for each caste the four-fold order of the individual life beginning with the religious education and discipline of the Brahmacharin and culminating in the renunciation and the extreme devotion of the Sanyasin, the system of Samskâras and Prayaschittas (purificatory ceremonies) the institution of temples and *mathe*, the institution of widowhood, the festivals for social recreations with their underlying religious signification, and a religious system quite as complex as the social system ranging from the lowest form of worship through several grades to the highest form of *yoga* and realisation, and the obligation of self-restraint throughout all these can be understood only in the light of the central principle that ethical growth and spiritual realisation based on Vairagya (renunciation) form the highest purpose of *man's existence and that society is but the training* ground for its fulfilment. This idea has become engrained in the essential nature of the Hindus; and to manifest to the world the real worthiness of this idea in all its perfection and glory seems to be the providentially ordained aim of the evolution of the Hindu social organism. Other nations may follow after other ideals; but it is always a source of satisfaction to the Hindu to know that he follows the highest and the most eternal social ideal. Socio-

logists say that every human community evolves in pursuit of some favourite ideal or other, and that when the old ideal loses its virtue, it declines and dies. Such a catastrophe in the life of people is apt to be true when it follows some such temporal ideal as wealth or happiness or universal empire. But ours is the eternal ideal of spiritual perfection for the individual and for humanity; and there is not the least fear that the nation which has this end in view and which has been working for the last six thousand years and more towards the achievement of such a social aim—an aim, which can never lose its value or virtue—will ever die so long as it clings firmly to its great social ideal. Let the reformer beware how he tampers with this ideal or with those institutions that directly or indirectly tend to its realisation. By all means let him rectify and reform keeping always this end in view; but any attempt to change this ideal in favour of something new and strange will make him responsible a nation's death.

Every one who has in any way studied ancient India with profit knows how well and harmoniously this mighty and complex social organisation of the Hindus has worked for thousands of years, and how it has always tended to help on peace, order, and progress. Can the history of the world point out one other instance of a social organisation that has worked so successfully for so long a time? Even to-day it is as full of strength and vitality as it was in ancient times. But owing to various causes, internal and external, it is not now in perfect working order and needs only proper direction and repairs to set it right. Let the reformer know that it is not dead

Who can say that this social organisation, that overcame the mighty revolution attempted by the Jains and the Buddhists and the religious persecutions of certain Mahomedan tyrants, and that still resists the strenuous teachings of the modern missionaries of other climes and creeds, the destructive tendencies of modern education and the misdirected efforts of many radical reformers who can say that such an organism is dead? As the Hindu scriptures tell us, it is Kali confusion and strife consequent on the lower and worldly ideals displacing the higher spiritual ideal—that has been the chief cause of our social disorder. In other words it is the tempting character of this pursuit of wealth and pleasure and political power that is everywhere tending to dislodge the old spiritual ideal of man's ethical perfection from its due seat of honour. The down-fall of the Kshatriyas, foreign aggression and plunder, Mahomedan tyranny, poverty and the consequent struggle for life, mutual jealousy and hatred instead of the old sympathy and co-operation, these have been the main causes of our national decline. We are sorry to observe that our modern education, and an easy faith among the modern educated young men in the pleasant illusions of the democratic ideals of the West are also giving rise to a new disorganisation in Indian society.

From what we have said, it will be seen that, as the spiritual ideal is the proper ideal of man, there can be no proper social ideal which is other than the spiritual. The social ideal, if it is to be of any utility, must subserve the ends of the ultimate spiritual ideal. Freedom, wealth, prosperity, and even knowledge are all desirable ends only so long as they subserve the

spiritual aims of man; and it is not at all right to set them up as ends in themselves It is an illusion that many of our reformers fall into to suppose that social affairs have nothing to do with religion, and that the social ideal is essentially different from the religious ideal. All social reformation, therefore, must be based on religion; and as religion forms the most noble and vital element in human nature, there is no doubt that such reforms as are based on it will surely take root and thrive. No social reformer can safely ignore the religious ideal of a people when he proposes any change in their social system Whatever institution in our social system is directly or indirectly injurious to the maintenance of our national ideal must be fought against and done away with. Whatever institution is likely to be conducive to that end, but has become corrupt, must be purified and revived in strength; and whatever we mean to adopt from extraneous sources must be such as do not conflict with but are directly or indirectly helpful to the realisation of the national ideal It is from this standpoint of our national social ideal—the ideal of our ancient Rishis—that we must undertake to judge all work of reform by whomsoever advocated or achieved, and we should never be sparing in our efforts to oppose all attempts to incorporate into our social system, in blind imitation of foreign communities and nations, all such ideas and institutions, as are foreign to the genius of our people and are destructive of ethical aims and the consequent individuality of our social organisation.

It is chiefly by ignoring this stand point that almost all the modern reform-movements in India

have failed to produce any effect on the people. Since the note of reform was first struck by Raja Ram Mohun Roy about the beginning of the last century a host of reformers—many of whom have been persons of high moral and intellectual endowments, and of whose names, any country may be justly proud—have come and gone. The results so far achieved have been very meagre and quite unpromising. The movement set up by Ram Mohun Roy and continued with great zeal and success by his eminent successors, Devandra Nath Tagore and the famous Keshub Chunder Sen, has failed to produce any large impression on the people It has only succeeded in adding one more caste itself divided into three sects, to the one thousand and one castes that are already existing. Even purely social reform-movements have met with no better reception at the hands of the people and the orthodox community Their achievement is confined to the delivery of speeches, the passing of resolutions, and the judging of their success by the number of widow-remarriages, and intermarriages no matter how they are brought about The methods adopted by some of these reformers to carry out their object have so provoked even the educated community that counter movements of a conservative character have also sprung up in many places. Centuries ago Buddha sowed the seeds of a mighty social revolution in India. What has become of it? Orthodoxy in social matters is still as rigorous as ever; and the very name of Buddha has almost been forgotten by our people. Such is Indian orthodoxy in matters of religion and society.

We have now indicated the principle that should underlie the work of social reform and the general line

of its policy to be adopted therein The work of the reformer, therefore, should be one of "preservation and rectification" — far as the conditions of modern life permit it to be such but not one of wholesale 'destruction and substitution" as the late Raja Sir T. Madhava Row has so rightly put it. We strenuously oppose the principle of blind adoption of the institutions and ideals of an alien civilisation; not that we *dislike it because it is alien*, but that we are strongly convinced of its impossibility in our land. But we should be ready to advocate the adaptation and assimilation of all such extraneous ideas and institutions as are absolutely necessary for our social welfare and are *not at the same time discordant with our own long-cherished ideals and institutions* that have done so much good and have so successfully stood the test of time for thousands of years We know that social freedom and well-being — well as material prosperity —though too much of them may also prove harmful when unassociated with the due social discipline—are necessary and even indispensable for, the realisation of the religious and ethical ideal of life We need not say, therefore, that all such movements — are calculated to improve the material and social prosperity of our nation command our full sympathy, so long as they do not tend to relax much the ethical and religious discipline of our ancient organisation of society and civilisation It is well that we always remember that life is indeed a discipline, and not merely an occasion for enjoyment. It is in this conviction that we have the keynote of the song of Indian progress—the keynote on which — based the music of the march of humanity to its glorious goal

SOCIAL REFORM AND THE SPIRITUAL IDEAL OF LIFE.

(BY MR ■ RAMANUJACHARIAR ■ A)

THE ill success of the recent social reform movements in India ■ largely attributable to ■ lack of comprehension and to the utter absence of sympathy and reverence in relation to our national social ideals and institutions. Some even among the leaders of these movements lose no opportunity to express their contempt for the spiritual ideals of our forefathers, to which they only too readily attribute almost all the social ills which they now observe among the people.

Opinion is sometimes expressed that the ancient religious ideal has tended to develop in the Hindus a sort of spiritual egoism and contempt for the world. The sacrifice of the temporal good at the altar of the spiritual forms no part of our ancient religious teachings. The sacrifice of earthly good is not needed for spiritual perfection, but what is so needed is its subordination; and it is the harmony between the temporal and the spiritual concerns of man that the Rishis have unmistakably recommended. Says Manu—"The chief temporal good is by some declared to consist in virtue and wealth; by some in wealth and lawful enjoyment; by some in virtue alone; by others in wealth alone; but the chief good here below is a combination of all the three; this is our sure decision." It is also well known that the keynote of the *Bhagavadgita* is action and the performance of duty without regard to consequences

Karma Yoga or the life of work and strenuous duty is indeed the gospel of Sri Krishna; and the life of complete retirement or absolute renunciation is declared to be impracticable; and if possible at all, it is said to be so only in the case of a very few, of perhaps one in a million. Is it not also a fact that the general tendency of human nature is irresistibly towards the temporal rather than towards the spiritual? How is it possible for one to believe that a religion, which has done its primary duty of attempting to offer only a salutary check on the natural tendency of human nature towards an extreme form of worldliness, has had the power to retard the progress of a nation? Can there be sacrifice without acquisition? And can there be no acquisition at all without the impelling force of selfishness? If so, is that acquisition of earthly good and wordly prosperity, which is due to selfishness, conducive to the true progress of civilisation? The chief function of religion has been to ethicise society and all its work; if in the discharge of this legitimate and natural function of religion society has to suffer somewhat in its temporal interests, it is surely no matter of great consequence. Far better a life of contentment and religious faith than one of discontent, irreligion and multitudinous stings of conscience! The evils to a society arising from these latter will, in the long run, far outweigh the sufferings arising from any temporary abatement of secular advantages.

Moreover, the ancient religious ideal combined in itself the highest form of social ideal that is possible for humanity, under the limitations imposed by the natural conditions of the world and the general nature of fellow

human beings The highest form of the spiritual ideal, including even the utmost sacrifice of the temporal for the sake of the spiritual interests, was imposed only on the Brahmin; and that too in the last stage of his life. The Brahmins formed, when compared with the rest of the community, only a microscopic minority.' They were called upon to be the exemplars of the Hindu spiritual ideal of social life; and other classes and castes had other social functions to discharge The temporal interests of the community as a whole were entrusted to the hands of the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas and the Sudras who were strictly forbidden by the Sastras to adopt the life of resignation of the Brahmins to the detriment of the temporal interests of the organised nation. Had these castes paid attention to the legitimate duties imposed on them by the Sastras, the Hindu nation would never have come to the economically unhappy condition in which we find it now. They have not done their duty by the nation. The Brahmins, owing to their hereditary incapacity for contributing to the temporal interests of the nation, could not do much in the direction of material amelioration. There is no use censuring the Brahmins for their not having done what they were not intended to do, nor is there any good in trying to abolish all distinctions in the discharge of common social functions—even such distinctions as have grown with the growth of the nation There can be nothing but mere folly in attempting to do away in a day with all those sentiments that have become crystallised in the course of centuries in the very soul of the nation. The primary duty of the reformer is not to set caste against caste on account of modern sentimental grievances,

nor to decry the old ideal of spirituality and man's ethical *perfection by ignoring the elements of its completeness* and integrity in social application, but to preach unity and co-operation in spite of distinctions, which, under modern conditions of life, do not carry with them any such privileges as excite envy or jealousy. The ideal of the Hindu social organisation has been to recognise the inevitableness of social inequalities and to make them subservient to the common development of the whole organisation All the necessary material and moral functions relating to *what may be called the physiology of social life have* been beautifully provided for in the building up of the Indian social ideal, which is certainly very far from being defective and lopsided so as to take no account of the urgency relating to the performance of the inevitable material functions of a complete social life. Let us therefore make all the component organs of our society work for the good of the whole by the effective discharge of their duties to themselves and to their countrymen. It is true that in many respects the *nation has deteriorated. But it is not true that religion* or the ideal of spirituality and individual ethical improvement has in any way contributed to this deterioration Among other causes, we believe, it is the want of faith in the religious and social ideal of our forefathers and the consequent absence of unity and self-sacrifice that have been at the bottom of our decay. In a lecture, which Mrs. Besant recently delivered at Calcutta on "The value of Theosophy in raising India" she maintained, with her characteristic force of eloquence *that religion is the basis not only of true national* life but also of material progress and prosperity.

'Read" she said, "the history of the past, and one fact would [illegible] out before you plainly and clearly, not only in India but in all the past great civilisations When you study a great civilisation whether it be that of Egypt, China Persia, Greece or Rome, you will find that in the palmiest days of that civilisation religion was the guiding force of the State. When were the days when India was mightiest, when her thrones were most secure, when her people were most intelligent when her manufactures and arts and industries and commerce flourished, when her sailors were known in far distant lands and the products of her artizans covered the face of the world ? It was in the days when religion was more cherished than wealth, in the days when the philosopher was thought of more than the prince, in the days when the Rajas would bow before the Rishis that instructed them, and when the basis of the royal authority lay in that loyalty which grew out of [illegible] belief in Divine Government. Slowly spirituality decayed, slowly the highest religion disappeared, slowly in the beginning of the descent, spirituality ceased to sway the minds and hear[illegible] of men with its imperial sceptre. What was the next step? Spirituality having gone far down the descent, then began the descent of intelligence Still followed the pathetic descent, the final step being the decay of material prosperity. Slowly, very slowly, India took the three steps of national decay ; first, the spiritual ; secondly, the intellectual ; and thirdly, the material The conclusion to which the thoughtful [illegible] would come was that this descent must be retraced step by step, and that first they must go to the root of things and revive the decayed

spirituality. The first step towards the raising of India was to lay again deep and broad the basis of her ancient spirituality. The second step was the building up, by a wise and well thought-out education, the intelligence of the young, so that they might be highly educated in an education adapted to the needs of the country, and might restore its perished intellectual supremacy. When these two things were done, when spirituality was revived, when education of the right sort was spreading when the new generation brilliant in brain, came forth upon the theatre of Indian public life—then was the redemption of India and the place of the men who would restore their lost power, their lost prosperity, their perished individuality, their arts and their industries. The restoration of that material prosperity was the third step and not the first, not only by the testimony of history but also by the arguments of reason "

Let the different sections of the community understand the underlying unity and high purpose of the Hindu social organisation and work together harmoniously for the advancement of the social and material interests of the country without mutual jealousy and hatred, and in due subordination of individual ambition to the common good without forgetting in the least the obligatoriness of their duties to [redacted] and God. Then the time will not be far distant when India will take her proper rank among the nations of the world, progressing not only materially, but morally and spiritually [redacted] well; she will then prove a noble example to benefit those who now follow lower ideals as well as for those nations and individuals who are yet unborn. The peculiarly wonderful racial and religious synthesis

of Hindu civilisation has given it such a comprehensive and cosmopolitan character as is sure to make it the type of progressive social organisations in the future, when the mania of national selfishness will be soothed down to the sanity of man's common humanity. It is therefore not the enthronement of the spiritual ideal on a high pedestal that accounts for the decay of material prosperity and progressiveness in Hindu social life. The cause of the decay is elsewhere; it is to be found in the non-recognition of the grand unity of Hindu society and in that want of faith in its noble ethical aims which has been the potent cause of so much of our social selfishness and isolation.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL PROGRESS

(By Prof. M. RANGACHARIAR M A)

AMONG the many interesting features of modern India, that which is perhaps the most striking is the consciousness which the educated and the thoughtful people of the county [redacted] to have in every part of it, that somehow all is not well with them and with their country. They appear to have more or less vaguely realised that there is an absence of suitable adjustment between their present environment and the condition into which their past history has brought them and that the progress, which they, in the spirit of true patriots, wish to [redacted] achieved in the life of their country and ancient civilisation, is not possible of accomplishment in the near future, so long [redacted] this want of adjustment continues. This consciousness of the unsuitability of India's present conditions to the desired evolution of her future progress is manifesting itself in various forms of activity, which are all intended to correct that same unsuitability by causing a fresh adjustment of the old civilisation to the new conditions The discerning patriot among [redacted] seems to be dissatisfied with many things that at present make up the civilisation, in the midst of which he and his countrymen have to live To him there appear many interesting social and religious problems, the solution of which is, though beset with almost superhuman difficulties, urgently demanded by the genius of progress, and which

are therefore curiously full of ■ fascination that grows with the growth of his own patriotism and love of public well-being. To the thoughtless man who lives merely for the hour, ■ well ■ to the unpatriotic man who selfishly lives for himself, these problems do not in any way p'ove a source of trouble; and their tryingly burdensome character which is so largely due to their magnitude importance and intricacy, does not in the least tend to cause any anxiety to such ■ man and make him feel disappointed or despondent. His freedom from anxiety, however, is comparable only to the painlessness of the paralytice person or of the man under chloroform It is said that he who cannot feel pain cannot become cognizant of his own illness, and to be ll and not to know it is indeed one of the most dangerous forms of illness Therefore, in spite of the pain of discontent and the pressure of anxiety that have come upon all thoughtful and patriotic minds in our country, there is every reason to believe that this fear of a possible break-down of Indian civilisation and the desire that its characteristically noble elements should be well safe-guarded are in themselves really favourable signs of a fairly vigilant popular life, which justify ■ hopeful view in regard to the possibilities of healthy progress in the future history of India.

It is a well-known fact of human nature that the man who is in trouble is rarely capable of having a clear vision and exercising a calm judgment in regard either to the causes of his own trouble or to the cures that are to be appl ed to it; and it is further seen that the more emotional he is in feeling the trouble that has come upon him, the less fit he becomes to get out

of it merely by the exercise of his own intelligence or provident carefulness. Accordingly the more sensitive patriot, whose emotional tenderness makes him feel the ills of his countrymen very keenly is, by the very keenness of his emotional sensibility, unfit to give calm advice and offer wise guidance. But in all those [redacted] where the progress of [redacted] people has to be achieved by the people themselves with the help of the forces which are operating inside the [redacted]nity, it is only such sensitive and emotional persons that are available and willing to work out the desired progress Indeed, one of the chief lessons of history has been to make it evident that the progress of human communities is everywhere more largely achieved from within than by means of unassimilated forces operating from without. It is not of course right to hold that external forces [redacted] altogether ineffective in causing the progress of human communities; for such a view would ignore the influence of communities upon communities and civilisations upon civilisations. External forces are known to have in many places awakened [redacted] well [redacted] enlightened human communities; but in all such [redacted] those communities have, before deriving such benefit, made those forces their own. This kind of assimilation of external influences takes away their externality from them to a very large extent; and only as far as their externality has been so removed do they seem to have had any scope for beneficent operation within the communities concerned Social evolution, therefore, has always to proceed directly from within, although the power that works out progress may be either wholly self-derived or be largely the result of assimilation from without. In any case, it

is the sensitive patriot who has to serve as the centre of evolution, provided always that he is well endowed with a true insight into the complete life of society and has an accurate knowledge of all those conditions of communal development and growth in accordance with which alone it is possible for any society to progress. Although it is his potentiality that chiefly determines both the character and the measure of the progress that comes to his community, still his power for good is at least equally determined by the sympathy and the support which the people of his own community give to him. Their capacity to appreciate and respond to his noble impulses and his worthy and well-directed activities is certainly a factor which cannot at all be lightly ignored Patriotic stimulation and popular response are everywhere known to have produced progress together Thus all those who wish to employ themselves in India in the laudable service of their fellow-men have not only to feel keenly and comprehensively the various ills to which their countrymen are subjected, but they have also to acquire the sympathy and support of the people they wish to serve and command at the same time the power of thinking clearly and judging calmly in respect of all those unbalanced situations which require to be righted in the life of their country and its civilisation

It is thus evident that progress and social evolution in India have to be worked out by the Indians themselves. They have to assimilate whatever new forces are operating wholesomely in their midst from without, they have to strengthen the potentiality of their earnest and discerning leaders by making it possible for

them to obtain the inevitably needed measure of popular appreciation and sympathy and support And again the leaders among them have always to be in possession of statesmanlike wisdom and foresight, while being able to perceive in the readiest manner all the disquieting symptoms of popular suffering and social inharmony. The question really is to know wherefrom our patriots and social leaders are to derive the help needed for acquiring these desirable qualifications, which form the chief means of advancing future progress and prosperity in India It must be obvious that such help comes to a large extent from the study of the various historic forces that have had a bearing on the present condition of India. The idea that the progressive patriot is more concerned with the present and the future than with the past has undoubtedly a meaning in it; but that meaning does not consist in holding that he has no lessons to learn from the past, and no guidance to derive from history. The improvement of present conditions and the stimulation of future advancement form the very essence and core of the work of all progressive reformation It is in this sense that the patriotic reformer is chiefly concerned with the present and the future. It cannot be hard to see, however, that his power to accomplish what he has in view is largely dependent on his knowledge of the past history of his own country. Such knowledge will enable him to gauge accurately the capacity of his countrymen for progress and enlightenment. It will enable him to understand the nature of the forces which are calculated to tell most effectively upon them in the way of inciting them to strenuous endeavour to fit their country for the attainment of a higher life in

happier future. It will also show him the character of the various obstacles to progress, which in the past have hindered the fuller and more rapid development of civilisation in the country, and which may yet do so in the future. To know all these cannot but be of great advantage to the [illegible] who wishes to serve as [illegible] leader, or even as a mere follower, in any great cause of popular progress. That being so, the position of the man who consecrates himself particularly to the work of social progress is one in which such knowledge is not merely helpful but [illegible] absolutely indispensable; for, without it, his energies are evidently apt to prove not only very ineffective, but often also mischievous and prone to retard real advancement. In the absence of such knowledge even his noble ambition may lose all its warmth, when it meets with [illegible] opposition which he does not know how to manipulate successfully, and which he, from his standpoint, naturally enough considers to be irrational and unmeaning.

It is [illegible] has been pointed out, a peculiarity of social progress that it [illegible] more largely intra-communal than any other kind of progress; other kinds of progress [illegible] be and are often more appreciably stimulated from without. Even the religion of [illegible] people may be changed from without; and history is aware of instances in which such a forced change in religion has actually taken place The shifting of the centre of authority in politics has been frequent enough in the past history of almost all countries and nationalities; power has passed from dynasty to dynasty and from conqueror to conqueror. And such transferring of the pivot of political power from position to position has, in [illegible] large number of cases, given rise to marked variations in the political

institutions which affect the privileges of the people on the one hand, and the prerogatives of the state on the other. But social changes are nowhere known to have been readily accomplished from without Therefore, it is even more incumbent on the patriot who works for social progress to get a correct idea of how his people moved in the past, what goal they have had all along in view, and why, and under the influence of what forces, they were led to aim at that goal Before considering the question whether any further advance in the direction of the old goal is beneficial or otherwise in the present circumstances, the bearings of that old goal have to be well measured and marked out in detail. But along with this historical knowledge of past conditions and the insight into what constitutes the great heart of the people and their civilisation it is absolutely necessary that the humanitarian worker in the field of progress does not place himself in a position of pronounced antagonism to the essential institutions of the very civilisation whose capacity for improvement he is endeavouring to modify and increase. Even social institutions are more prone to receive benefit from the strenuous and sympathetic labours of the friendly critic, whose aim is to be helpful and constructive, than from the unsympathetic and destructive efforts of the unfriendly fault-finder, whose immediate aim is obviously to pull down the existing edifice of social order and moral security. Unless the patriot's heart is in harmonious attunement to the cherished ideals of the people and is also openly cognizant of the virtue of their civilisation, it is hopeless for him to succeed in obtaining their confidence and their following; and

without winning their confidence and commanding their following he can, if at all, only improve himself at best. No progress of the individual, which is out of touch with the ebb and flow of the popular life that is around can in any way contribute to real social advancement; a common ideal must sway the whole of the communal life of a people before they are enabled *to achieve progress by marching more and more in the* direction of that goal of a perfected human happiness which all noble civilizations have to keep in view. To work on the people by being with them and only one among them does often take away from the *eclat* of a reformer's life of isolated distinction. But can social progress be achieved at less cost?

THE EFFICIENCY OF HINDU CIVILISATION

(By Prof M RANGACHARIAR, M A)

OBJECTION has been taken to our view of progress on the score that Hindu civilisation is an embodiment of a decaying and dying ideal, and that material progress is in no way a mere maid in attendance on the queen of progress. It is, therefore desirable to examine in the light of history the efficiency of Hindu civilisation in respect of its continued existence and capacity to achieve human happiness Recently on the occasion when Mr J D Rees read his paper on 'Domestic Life in India" under the auspices of the Society of Arts in London Sir William Lee Warner referred with admiration to what he called the *manly patience* of the Hindus. We do not exactly know how far he had realised, when he made that remark, that this manly patience is not only a general characteristic of the modern Hindu inhabitants of India, but that it has also been a factor of power in connection with the steady maintenance of the very life of Hindu civilisation The idea that the industrial side of Hindu civilisation has been inadequately cared for by the organisers of Hindu society is largely due to what is nothing less than historical short-sightedness Let us consider the condition of India at the time when British tradesmen first arrived on the shores of this country with the object of carrying on commerce with her; and let us remember also how they

could in those days make four hundred per cent profits out of their transactions with India and her industrial world of work Those who have read to any advantage Mr. Dutt's Economic History of India, as well as those who have also understood the inner economic meaning of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's contention that the decay of the material prosperity of India is due more to depletion than to non-production, will at once realise that the comparatively weak industrial condition of India to-day is in no way due to any inherent defect or weakness in the social organism, but that it is to a large extent the result of the economically unwholesome forces which have been working harmfully from outside. It may be asked why the organisation of Hindu society has not been able to overcome these detrimental external forces. And the answer is that Hindu society has not had time enough to recoil that it is still only exhibiting its historically famous manly patience and that the time to the test patience completely has not yet arrived And if those who mould the condition and guide the affairs of India— we mean her patriotic sons as well as her modern rulers—awake in time, the day of recoil may not arrive at all, and the process of recuperation may be made to begin long before the recoil commences

Even politically India has conducted herself in a similar with patience and manliness The organisation of Hindu society has been laid on pacific lines, and it must surely be easy to see that there is more ethics in the love of peace than in the thirst for war. We do not hereby declare that Hindu society has ignored the inevitableness of war in the

existing state of the life of [redacted] on earth. But it is one thing to recognise that war [redacted] inevitable as an element in human politics and quite another thing to glorify militarism and aggressiveness. Peace-loving Hindu civilisation has only been too frequently disturbed from outside. Pacific individuals also are similarly dealt with in human societies everywhere. But it is wrong to hold either that the peace-loving civilisation or that the pacific individual is in consequence incapable of self-assertion The student of history ought to judge Indian civilisation by taking a comprehensive survey, say, of the relation of that civilisation to Islam and its spirit of aggressiveness [redacted] manifested in the centuries preceding British rule in India. How the peace-loving Hindu organisation yielded to the pushing force from outside at once in the beginning, and how it manfully and patiently put up with the disturbance till it could bear it no longer, are both obvious facts of Indian History which are easily verifiable. The Islamic disturbance of Hindu civilisation actually began in the ninth century of the Christian era and gradually increased in volume and intensity till in the fourteenth century its power for mischief received an emphatic check from the organisation of the Vijianagar Empire in the South of India. From the middle of the fourteenth century to the end of the eighteenth century of the Christian era, we have in Indian History a period of the recoil of Hindu civilisation and its self-assertion. What the Vijianagar Empire left unaccomplished Sivaji and his successors in the Mahratta confederacy took up; and the Sikh power, the well-spring of whose life is seen to lie in the underlying rocks of Hindu spirituality and

religious universalism, continued to operate against external aggression even after the Mahratta power became weakened. In this sequence of events is to be found the justification for the remark of the late Sir William Hunter that the British won India more from the Hindus than from the Muhammadans as already the Hindus had wrested the sovereignty of India almost completely from the aggressive clutches of Islam. Later political events in Indian History are so apt as to remind one of the fable in which, while each of two cats was quarrelling for its due share of the cheese, the monkey managed to intrude and have the whole of it for himself. We need not say, of course, that this means no discredit to the establishment of British political power in India. Our idea has simply been to point out the favourable concourse of circumstances which had then been brought about so largely by the effect of the self-assertion of Hindu civilisation as against the aggressive spirit of Islam. Four centuries of manly patience and four centuries of effective *self-assertion are thus truly characteristic of the* way in which Hindu civilisation has moved on and maintained itself; and we cannot say how it is possible for even the most ardent of our modern patriots to proclaim that this civilisation has now been completely crippled It is harder to acquire the power to suffer than to acquire the readiness to struggle; and in the struggle that comes after the suffering that has been borne with manly patience, the fund of power is invariably more inexhaustible than in the struggle which bristles up at once like the irritated porcupine.

Accordingly it is hard to see how, consistently with the facts of history, it is at all possible for any one to

assert that the organization of Hindu society has been weak in its material aspects. At a time when the commercial competition of the East India Company had not told quite so severely on the industrial life of India as now, Sir Thomas Munro is known to have pronounced the following judgment on Hindu civilisation —'I do not exactly know what is meant by civilising the people of India. In the theory and practice of good Government they may be deficient: but if a system of agriculture, if unrivalled manufactures, if the establishment of schools for reading and writing, if the general practice of kindness and hospitality, and above all if a scrupulous respect and delicacy towards the female sex are amongst the points that denote a civilised people, then the Hindus are not inferior in civilisation to the people of Europe; and if civilisation is to become an article of trade between the two countries, I am convinced that this country will gain by the import cargo." Long before Sir Thomas Munro thus remarked that England might gain from Indian civilisation, Megasthenes bore similar witness to the excellence and efficiency of Hindu civilisation. It is worthy of note that this Greek chronicler has not said that the Hindus were deficient in any way in the theory and practice of good Government. To him the moral results of the glorious good Government organised and established by Hindu civilisation was an object of surpassing wonder. Nevertheless, Munro was naturally enough led to hold the opinion that the people of India were deficient in the theory and practice of good Government, because British civilisation came into relation with the civilisation of India at a time when a serious internal struggle was going on

in the country to re-establish the equilibrium of Indian civilisation after it had been severely disturbed by Islam The late Mr. Ranade's exposition of the political organisation, which Sivaji is known to have initiated for the conduct of the affairs of the Mahratta Empire founded by him, ought to dispel the delusion relating to what is conceived to be the political incapacity of Hindu civilisation to evolve an orderly and progressive administration of Government. To judge the capacity of Hindu civilisation wholly from its somewhat emaciated modern condition is no better than measuring the strength of a well-built and vigorous man by assuming that he is in an absolutely normal condition only when there is a fit of fever on him. What, then will enable India and her civilisation to recover strength and to get rid of the debility which has been the result of that struggle of self assertion which Indian civilisation has had to carry on for centuries against very unpropitious outside forces and extraneous circumstances? To answer this question completely and satisfactorily is not very easy; but it must be evident that strength is rarely obtained in such situations from the hypochondriacal belief that all hope is lost and that relief can come only through death We have to work with the belief that we are strong and that our civilisation is well possessed of great potentialities. The very consciousness of strenth stimulates strength. Now that there is peace in the land and that the well-organised British political power does not openly antagonise the inner potency of Indian thought and life, there is reason to be hopeful in regard to the future.

The Vijianagar Empire rose out of the religious and moral inspiration of the great Vidyaranya. Sivaji

himself was the disciple of Ram Doss and the *Bhagwa Jhanda* of the Mahrattas has always proclaimed to the world the nature of the inspiration which, proceeding from Ram Doss, produced the Mahratta power. How the inspiration of Guru Govind, who was worthily honoured and worshipped as the leader of religious thought among the Sikhs made them into a mighty military power is also full of meaning in this connection. It is also an established fact that the great work of Gautama Buddha preceded the famous empire of Asoka in India; and this king's rock-edicts are even to-day moral marvels to the civilised world. Let us ponder well over all those facts of Indian History *before we make up our mind to find flaws in the foundation* of the grand social organisation of the Hindus. India's civilisation has manifested to the world many excellences and surely its manly patience is in no way the least among them. To conclude that patience means absence of manliness is a very unjustifiable mistake; and it is still more unjustifiable to hold that, because, owing to debility produced by natural causes operating from outside, some of its limbs are now seen to be feeble in capacity, its heart is worn-out and has become powerless. Indeed the power in the heart is still unabated, and its effectiveness is sure to be maintained as long as care is taken that material and political advantages in life are not made in this country to serve as ends in themselves. The genius of Hindu civilisation, as of most other civilisations, is against such treatment. One of the most famous Western seers of the nineteenth century whose literary greatness has been as remarkable as his insight into the essential conditions of human suffering

and human progress has pronounced his opinion on the position which the struggle for material advantages ought to have amor g the varied functions of [redacted] advancing civilisation. The same thing coming from the mouth of an Indian Rishi may look like antiquated absurdity to some of our modern patriots, but they cannot so lightly deal with Victor Hugo. He says: 'A disaster—I might almost call it the disaster of our time [redacted] a certain tendency to bring everything within the limits of this life. Give to man as his sole end and object, this earthly and material existence and you *aggravate all his miseries by the inherent* negation: you lay upon wretches, already crushed to the ground, the unsupportable burden of Nothingness: you convert mere suffering, which is the law of God, into despair, which is the law of hell. Hence convulsions which shake society to its base. Assuredly I am one of those who desire- no one in this place doubts it,—I am one of those who desire, I do not say sincerely, the world is all too weak I desire with an ardour that no words can express, and by every possible means to ameliorate in this life the material lot of those who suffer. But the first of all ameliorations is to give them hope. How little do our finite miseries become, when [redacted] infinite hope is mingled with them. The duty of [redacted] al, be we who we may, whether we be legislators or writers is to diffuse, to spread abroad to expend, to lavish, under every form, the whole energy of society, in warring against and destroying misery: and, at the same time, to lead al to lift their heads *towards heaven, to direct all souls, to turn all* expectations towards a life beyond this, where justice shall be requited. Let us proclaim it aloud. No one shall

have suffered unjustly or in vain. Death is a restitution The law of the material world is equilibrium the law of the moral world is equity. God is recovered at the end of all Let us not forget it: let us teach it to all: there would be no dignity in living—it would not be worth the trouble—if we were destined wholly to die. What lightens labour, what sanctifies toil, what makes man strong, good, wise, patient benevolent just, at once humble and great worthy of intellect, worthy of liberty, is to have ever before him the vision of a better world, shining athwart the darkness of this life." It may thus be seen what a mighty part is played by moral and religious forces in producing human amelioration and furthering the advance of civilisation. That there is reason to be disappointed with the lack of prosperity that is observable in the modern conditions of Indian life and civilisation, we are well aware of and deplore. But we contend that great care has to be bestowed on the proper diagnosis of its cause or causes; otherwise, the remedies we propose may prove not merely inadequate but positively injurious.

RELIGION AS THE BASIS OF SOCIAL REFORM.

(By Mr ■ RAMANUJACHARIAR M A)

It is well-known that since the dawn of history religion has played ■ dominant part in the march of civilisation. Throughout history religion has been the most fundamental factor in human progress, and all of man's social and political institutions have been based upon religious beliefs and have always derived the force of their life and their inspiration almost solely from them But for his religious instinct, the natural man could not have emerged from his primitive condition of barbarism so ■ to attain the state wherein he now is It is undeniable that, even at the present day, in spite of all modern intellectual opposition, man's religious instinct in some shape or other represents a social force of enormous power which may be utilised for good or evil, that is, to make or mar ■ nation's progress.

The theory that set down religious beliefs as the product of priestly imposture on human credulity, has well-nigh disappeared; and the so-called scientific thinkers of a latter day seem to hold that religion is a product of the whole social, imaginative and emotional nature of man—a chimera which had its purpose to serve in the progress of humanity in the earlier stages, but which must disappear gradually in the light of increased knowledge and scientific advancement. It is obvious that even this view does not go to the root of the matter. It converts ■ funda-

mental trait of human nature into an adventitious one. The fact that at all stages of humanity in ancient as well as in modern times, the fundamental questions of life have been religious questions directly tends to its subversion. Even in this boasted age of rational thought in Europe the new rationalism has not been able to kill the religious spirit; and the fundamental religious questions have again come to the front as old friends in a new dress. The secular social philosophers themselves, who were all along sleeping on the rosy bed of their fanciful social ideals, have now been awakened to a consciousness of the weakness of their position, and are trying to reconstruct their ideals on the fundamental basis of religion. The religious instinct is an eternal and fundamental trait in human constitution, and the religious ideal, under whatever form of social and religious organisation it may be realised, is necessarily the highest and noblest ideal formulated by human thought. All other ideals of life must be subordinate to, and in harmony with, this ideal; and society itself has no other end than to contribute to man, so far as the ever varying conditions of nature permit, an environment suitable to the realisation of this his highest end.

The modern Indian patriot should not fail to note this natural and necessary connection between the religion and the sociology of a people. This connection, owing to various causes, has been and is far more intimate in our country than elsewhere, and gives to all our social institutions a stability which is unknown in other countries. But for this, Hindu society and Hindu civilisation would have disappeared long ago. Even now, it cannot but be a source of pleasure and

consolation to [redacted] that Hindu life is capable of resisting all hasty reforms tending to weaken it or to destroy it The late Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao has said in one of his journalistic contributions— 'It [redacted] a matter of great congratulation to India that her religion, her sociology and her political system possess so much solidity and rigidity as to rest at all violent, whimsical, arbitrary, hasty and ill considered changes My feeling of congratulation is intensified in proportion as I contemplate the unsteadiness, the insecurity, and the chaotic and dangerous tendencies which prevail and are growing in Europe and which the faulty system of English education in India is inspiring some of the educated classes with a desire to admire and imitate I repeat that it is a matter of great congratulation that the more thoughtless and intemperate reformers [redacted] not blessed with any success likely to goad them into insane inebriation I am sure that this feeling of congratulation [redacted] not incompatible with [redacted] wish for a slow, steady, natural and gradual progress in all departments of the life of our vast and varied population."

It has almost become the nature of those who have been brought under the influence of Western education to repudiate the natural connection between religion and sociology and to dogmatically assert that religion is an affair to be settled between the individual and god, if there be any such being [redacted] God, and that society, as such, being independent of religion, has to follow [redacted] independent ideal of its own. If religion forms [redacted] essential part of human nature, and if the religious ideal and no other can satisfy the highest aspirations of man, no one can possibly conceive a

social ideal which is altogether independent of the religious ideal or inconsistent with it Individualism and socialism have no necessary contradiction. Both of them must conform to the higher ethical ideal which has its root in the highest religious nature of man It must be remembered that society is not an organism in the strictest sense of the term but only an organisation of the independent individuals who compose it. Society by itself is an abstraction ; the realities are the individuals who compose it To talk of society as though it were something different from the individuals is to a certain extent to hypostasise an abstraction— to talk of an abstraction as though it were a real and independent entity It is also true that the individual cannot realise his highest ideal in full, should he cut himself off from society, for he is not only an individual but a social being These two aspects of human nature are not mutually contradictory ; but they find their harmony in the higher nature of man as a religious and ethical being. The realisation of the higher spiritual life which involves individual restraint and social discipline, is the essential aim not only of Hinduism, but also of almost all the religions of the world. The ancient Rishis had this end clearly in view when they legislated for the Hindu society ; and that is why they were so eminently successful in introducing reforms while their modern followers in the field of social legislation who are without any higher principle to guide them who have to grope in the dark and meet with deserved discomfiture.

Social reform, then, must be based on religious reform History shows that all social reform has followed in the wake of religious reform India too has

witnessed mighty social upheavals following on the heels of the religious reformations started by Buddha, Sankara, Ramanuja Chaitanya and others. Either religious reform should precede social reform or both have to march hand in hand If religion undergoes gradual purification, the purification of all those social and religious institutions that have a direct or indirect bearing on religion will also naturally follow as a matter of course. It is true that, if the method here recommended be adopted, the reform of such institutions will be slow and gradual; but it must be remembered at the same time that the opposition will be less and the success, though distant, is certain. On the other hand the attempt of some of our over-hasty patriots to pull down violently the Hindu social fabric in the manner in which some Christian missionaries are trying to pull down the religious fabric of the Hindus, is not only unwise but impossible. Even the endeavour to patch up that social fabric here and there according as a fleeting fancy or the glamour of a foreign civilisation dictates is a task, which we are sure will never meet with solid success To enlighten the people and to purify their social and religious institutions so as to enable them to evolve whatever is highest in spirituality and social life along the lines marked out by their national genius ought to constitute the essential work of the social reformer. On the contrary, to set one class or caste against another, to despise the treasures and traditions of the past, to ridicule the national bent of mind in favour of religion, to discard the associated social customs, and to try to introduce the manners, the fashions and the social ideas of a foreign civilisation, which are opposed

to the religious sentiments of the people, will only cause social confusion that will end in disaster.

It should also be remembered that Western civilisation, in imitation whereof many violent changes are sought to be introduced into the Hindu social system, is itself no unmixed good. Like everything human, it has also its two aspects the aspects of good and evil of the useful and the illusory The former aspect is manifested in the spirit of industry and research which has resulted in the advancement of science and commerce; and the latter consists in a too radical and democratic set of social ideas which are dangerous to peace, order and progress, and which tend to irreligion anarchy and social confusion. This latter is not the logical outcome of the former; and it is therefore, easy to separate the one from the other, so as to adopt the one and reject the other. It has appeared to us on many occasions that what our ardent social reformers want us to do is to adopt at once the easier weakness of the West, rather than its harder strength; perhaps they would adopt both without discrimination It is the duty of all sincere patriots to promote the adoption of all those ideas which tend to our scientific and commercial progress -to the progress of knowledge and of wealth—and to reject such ideas as tend to social disintegration and decay Any want of discrimination here will result in the loss of all that is valuable and good in our religious and social system, and will reduce our society to the chaotic condition in which Western societies are widely suspected to be at the present time. Says Gustave Le Bon in his *Psychology of Peoples*— 'The evolution of civilisation has unhappily created for the modern man a multitude

of wants, without giving him the means of satisfying them, and in this way has promoted general discontent. Civilisation is doubtless the mother of progress, but it is the mother as well of socialism and anarchism, those redoubtable expressions of the despair of the masses that are no longer sustained by any religious belief. Compare the restless feverish European discontented with his lot, with the Oriental always satisfied with his destiny In what do they differ, if not in regards the state of their soul ?" Yes; it is true that the Oriental is strong in his religious faith as well in sober and steady in his aspirations; and the European notwithstanding his professed adherence to the teachings of Christ who was himself an Oriental, is yet a grabbing wording unsustained by any strong faith. A nation that is not strong in its faith in ideals is destined to die To quote again Gustave Le Bon " History shows us that peoples do not long survive the disappearance of their gods. The civilisations that are born with them also die with them " If India is to live, she must revivify herself by strengthening her religious faith, and base all her social and other reforms on the adamantine rock of an elevating national religion.

Let us learn before it is too late that the modern socialistic and anarchist ideals of the West can never be realised on earth The age when there are no classes, when all men are absolutely equal, enjoying all the good things of life and the world in common, exists only in the minds of some dreamy economists and sociologists. The primary duty of all social organisations is to endeavour to produce in the people a state of mind which is full of enlightened faith and contentment, and which will thereby make them as

happy as possible under whatever external conditions they may have to live. It is religion alone that can subjugate the ape and tiger in man and create for him a strong and healthy society which is capable of resisting all forces of disintegration and of conducing to peace and progress. After all, it is happiness that men struggle for in this world; and it is wrong to suppose that it is only in external things that the human soul can find it. Happiness is within us, created by ourselves, and is scarcely ever without us. It is under religious discipline alone that the true happiness of the soul will shine out so as to gladden the weary heart and cheer up the heavily laden mind; and the order of society should therefore be such, that, whatever may be the external differences between man and man, it is always seen to be capable of exerting the discipline which is conducive to that noble end of the supreme self-happiness that flows from self-sacrifice and self-realisation.

THE METHOD OF SOCIAL REFORM

(By DEWAN BAHADUR R RAGUNATHA ROW)

I have been asked to state my opinion whether it is preferable to introduce changes in our existing society by open warfare or by an insidious attack

If by 'open warfare' is meant to force changes upon people who are not convinced of their propriety, I am certainly not for it If, however it means the introduction thereof by noble means which may be open and public and in every way above board, I say that it is the only way in which changes should be carried out Noble ends ought to be gained by noble means only. This view dispenses of the other alternative *viz.*, reform by an insidious attack, which I certainly disapprove and condemn as unbecoming an Aryan and his Shastra. Let us calmly examine this question. Suppose you feel that some existing thing is an evil. You think that it should therefore be got rid of. Some other, without whose consent or help you cannot do so, differs from you and holds that that thing should not be interfered with. Suppose he is as strong as you and in some cases stronger than yourself What do you do then? You try to induce him to see that his belief is incorrect and the thing in question is really an evil and its abandonment is productive of good to him, to you, and to others similarly situated. If your view is correct, if you do not argue with the aforesaid person in an unnecessarily offensive manner, if you are able to reason out logically, if his mind is capable of

receiving correct impressions, if he cares to hear you attentively and if he is open to conviction, you succeed in making him believe that what you believed to be an evil is really an evil. He may still hold that it need not be or should not be removed on various grounds He may say that the magnitude of the evil is not sufficiently large to deserve the expenditure of that degree of force which is necessary to effect its removal, or that the happiness to be secured is so little that it is not worth the while of any useful man; or that he is too lazy to move actively for its eradication, or that its eradication will bring in its place a greater evil; or that, to eradicate it, assistance of some others may be absolutely necessary, but that they would not help him; and so on. What should you do then? You should go on to meet one and all of these objections. You will have to show him that the evil is such that its removal deserves the expenditure of any amount of your and his vigour, that its removal will produce such an amount of happiness that all sane men would admit that the removal is very profitable; that as a man and an Aryan he ought not to be inactive in doing his duty; that its removal will not bring in its place a greater evil; and that some others whose aid may be necessary should be similarly approached and converted to our views so that they may help him and you Such is the only course which is left to us to follow in all these cases.

It may so happen that at the end of an argument, we may see that we were wrong in holding it an evil. If so, we may have to give up our view and become converts to that of the person whom we tried to convert to our views. *

Take for instance the subject of widows and their marriage among the so-called Brahmins of the day. Ninetynine per cent. of them believe that according to the Shastra which is their gospel, a child, who has gone through the ceremony called Saptapady, and then happens to lose by death the person with whom her guardians intended that she should live as *her husband* becomes a widow and should lead a celibate life and die a virgin. Of the remaining one per cent, some only know that the Shastra does not lay down such a definition of a widow or such a rule, although about 50 per cent of the Brahmins now believe that the non-marriage of widows is productive of harm. Thus you will see that a microscopic minority of the Brahmins believe that *opposition to widow marriage is not Shastraic* and is productive of harm in this world; but marriage is an affair which requires the consent and approval of several parties forming a large majority of their society *to make it happy in every respect.* What should a thoughtful man do in this case? He should not apply to the Legislature for a statute for the punishment of those who would not agree so to marry or of those who would not help such parties as may agree so to marry. Legislation should be asked for only in cases in which society is likely to punish offenders either inadequately or inordinately In all other cases society is the best judge of offences and their punishments.

Man, as man, is entitled to the fullest liberty of thought and action, circumscribed only by society whose company and help he wishes to have. Every body is entitled to believe that widow marriage is Shastraic or non-Shastraic as he pleases. He does not incur

any liability to punishment for holding either view. Society has no right to punish any man for his opinion. It may exercise its own liberty either to associate with him or not. For so doing it is not liable to any penalty.

So long therefore, as one desires to introduce a change and wishes to associate with society, his duty would be to tell the members of that society that they have more correct ideas on the subject and that the prohibition of widow marriage has been working very injuriously to our society by making it immoral. If these facts are denied you are bound to prove them and appeal to their religious and moral feelings for inducing them to believe that these results constitute a great evil. You will have to prove that its removal will not only abate a nuisance but will bring on great happiness to all concerned. To lay down an impossibility as a peremptory command brings on contempt of the command; all rules diametrically opposed to nature must as a matter of course fail.

A prohibition to widow marriages must necessarily have proceeded from men who did not know the laws of nature and who did not possess even the forethought of some in the present generation. But the authors of the Shastra have been admitted by all orthodox people, both educated and non-educated, as men of deep thinking and immense forethought. By attributing this prohibition to them, they are pulled down from their high pedestal and the Shastra is converted into a twaddle. But the truth is that the Shastra does not prohibit it. You should convince your comrade of this and ask him to join you in removing the evil. He would say that India is already over-populated and

that widow marriages would cause greater influx of people and thus produce greater evil. He should be told that such a view is wrong, that whatever may result we should not do anything that is inherently wrong and that we have no right to decimate people to check the evil of over-population. He might say "suppose I join what can we do in such a big affair?" He must be told we both should go on until we succeed in converting a majority of us." I see no other course is open to us. Fortunately for us, our masses conservative as they are, appear to me very open to conviction. They have a strong belief that their Shastra is divine, that almost all, if not all, what is now being practised is in accordance with the Shastra; that those who say that some of the practices are bad, are people whose minds have been vitiated by foreign education that their condemnation of the practices must, therefore, be incorrect; that this world is composed of good and evil and therefore some should suffer; that to attempt to prevent them from suffering is against Divine will and should not therefore be attempted. Many such objections would be urged. We must prove to their satisfaction that these views of theirs are incorrect if we mean to effect any change for the better.

In short their whole faith is in the Shastra and all justification for them not interfering with custom is that they should not revolt against the Shastra. If I have correctly described the masses, then it becomes necessary to show them that the practice is against the Shastra; once they become convinced of that, they will join us in uprooting the evil. Some may attempt it quickly, others slowly, some spasmodically and others systematically.

I believe therefore, that social changes should be introduced by convincing people that they are not against the Shastra and they will not produce any evils This can only be done by constant preaching, and by circulation of cheap and free literature containing arguments based on the Shastra I believe that the masses cannot be approached if we divorce the Shastra from sociology

I know some of my brethren differ from me Future alone will decide the question whether they are right.

May God lead us into correct and true path !

THE METHOD OF INDIAN SOCIAL REFORM.

(By Mr N. RAMANUJACHARIAR M A)

IT is hardly necessary to state that the essential characteristics of the social ideal which the Indian patriot should have in view to guide him in the work of Indian regeneration, are mainly religious and ethical in their nature, though the temporal interests of the individual and society are not altogether lost sight of in that connection. Such has been our national social ideal since pre-historic times, when the ancient Aryans after protracted stress and struggle, peacefully settled in Aryavarta and evolved the early forms of their comprehensive social organization. Owing to the influence of its long and continued operation, this ideal has become part and parcel of the constitution of the Hindu mind. It is the bounden duty of all of us, therefore, to realise beforehand that, whatever changes we may wish to introduce into the Hindu social system, it should not be of such a nature as would conflict with its dominant ethical and religious spirit, which has become firmly rooted in the very character of the people by the slow and silent process of the evolution of centuries.

We are not of those who assert that Hindu social system as it is, is altogether perfect and needs no rectification or re-adjustment We do not of course agree with the social thinkers of the extreme school of orthodoxy who blindly assert, in the face of the manifest deficiencies of our existing social system, that the

ancient legislators have evolved for a perfect social organisation which is capable of continuing unaffected by time place or circumstances. This view is not only obviously untenable but also certainly contradicts the very teachings of those law-givers themselves. The various law books of the Hindus bear evident marks of their origin in different parts of the country and at different periods of history. Obviously they cannot be inviolable authorities in every matter for all times It is more proper to regard them as indispensable guides, inasmuch as they contain, in spite of their obvious defects and apparent contradictions, *materials and facts which no social thinker can* afford to overlook and indeed, as we are situated, they alone can show the ideal towards which the Hindu community has been progressing for thousands of years. To those who have studied with care the ancient literature of this country, one thing is clear, namely, that the Hindu social ideal is more spiritual and ethical than wordly and temporal, and that the primary function of society has all along been understood to be the discipline and control of the individual, as to enable him to realise the spiritual and ethical aims of life with little perturbation and discomfort from the material world as possible. It is therefore the duty of those who, by birth, position or education, become the leaders of society, or who by virtue of their patriotism and enlightenment ardently desire and work for its regeneration *and advancement not to loosen the bond* which connects the individual to society and thus leave him free to act as he chooses, but to strengthen it as far as possible in view to the maintenance of a complete and concordant social solidarity. This is the spirit

that actuated not only the ancient law-givers, but also the latter religious reformers known to the history of India. Provided that the modern patriot makes up his mind to follow in spirit the teachings of these ancient guides, and provided also that he tries to win the confidence of the people and makes himself acceptable to them by the purity of his life and the nobility of his teachings we can conceive of no justifiable reason whatever for his failure

Again we need not say that we disapprove of the methods adopted by some among us who under the excuse of having secured a new intellectual enfranchisement from the thraldom of old-world superstition set their own inadequate reason against the wisdom of nature and the forces of evolution and treat with contempt all the time-honoured institutions of the people The beliefs, the customs, and the institutions of the Hindus are in reality not altogether the creations of their law-givers, but are largely the products of natural evolution under conditions peculiar to the constitutions of Hindu thought and character It is impossible and even unwise to endeavour to change these institutions radically without changing the essential nature of the Hindu mind The reformer's business is, therefore, to modify social institutions, in a spirit of sympathy and conciliation, wherever a clear defect is made out in the present circumstances, and not to try to root out the cherished popular convictions of centuries in response to the dim and dubious light of what he conceives to be his liberated reason To take one concrete instance, any attempt on the part of the reformer to change the conviction of the people in respect of the inviolable sacredness of the matrimonial

bond in favour of the new conception of contractual marriage with all its paraphernalia of registration, divorce and legal proceedings, is obviously not in the right direction and is altogether opposed to the ethical and religious instincts of the nation. Moreover no case has yet been satisfactorily made out against the present ideal of matrimony, either on the score of its injustice or the score that it leads to unhappiness; and in fact no other alternative is conceivable which in its practical working will give rise to less individual hardships and create less individual disabilities. Nor do we see much evil that calls for urgent remedy in the institution of widowhood among the high caste Hindus, except in so far as it relates to the case of virgin widows, whose enforced asceticism is often felt as a burden. The Hindu social arrangement gives women in their widowed state abundant opportunities to realise the higher life of religion and spirituality, which ultimately constitutes the goal of every civilised community. If the present conditions be such as make it difficult for our widows to realise this ideal even partially, it is the duty of the reformer to work by teaching, preaching and the spreading of enlightenment, so as to bring into existence the required helpful conditions. On the contrary to attempt to abolish the institution of widowhood altogether is not only to degrade the higher for a lower ideal, but also to give room for so many other evils that the change may bring in its train. We are aware that some reformers do not object to widowhood if it were voluntary, but only object to enforced widowhood. But does not society only exercise its legitimate function in enforcing what it

conceives to be for the highest and most lasting welfare of the individual [redacted] well as of itself? The higher castes have prescribed for themselves certain rules of *discipline and* [redacted] *higher ideal of life in* which [redacted] very large amount of asceticism and self-restraint is obligatory. How can any individual who overthrows those essential rules in practice claim to belong to those bodies? A widow so long as she claims her right and dignity as [redacted] member of such a higher caste, must lead a life consistent with the discipline and ideal of that caste. If she degrades the ideal and breaks its discipline for the sake of her personal convenience she has no right to complain if her caste disapproves of her conduct; nor is the reformer justified in his eagerness to come to her rescue by taking up her cause and trying to degrade the higher ideal of the caste as a whole. It is not our purpose here to enter into all our social evils or the particular methods of their eradication. We only wish to point out the spirit which should actuate the reformer and the method by which he should direct his work, should he wish to do good to the society in whose welfare he is so much interested. It is a mistake on the part of the reformer to depend solely on his individual reason, and refuse to accept the higher unconscious reason of nature and experience, which has for thousands of years worked to produce and adjust the beliefs, the customs and the social institutions of a particular people. The individual reason [redacted] no perfect and unerring guide; and the principles and rules deduced from the knowledge and empirical experiences of previous generations under the peculiar conditions of [redacted] particular com-

munity are essential to individual and social happiness. Says Herbert Spencer, "Clearly, then, a visionary hope misleads those who think that in an imagined age of reason which might forthwith replace an age of beliefs but partly rational, conduct would be correctly guided by a code directly based on considerations of utility. A utilitarian system of ethics cannot, at present, be rightly thought out even by the select few; and is quite beyond the mental reach of many. The value of the inherited and theologically enforced code is, that it formulates, with some approach to truth, the accumulated results of past human experience. It has not arisen rationally but empirically. During past times mankind have eventually gone right after trying all possible ways of going wrong. The wrong-goings have been effectually checked by disaster and pain and death and the rightgoings have been continued because not thus checked. There has been a growth of beliefs corresponding to these good and evil results. Hence the code of conduct, embodying discoveries slowly and almost unconsciously made through a long series of generations has transcendent authority on its side."

The method of reform, then, we need not say, should be slow and cautious. Contempt for the institutions and beliefs which have been found congenial to the society as a whole ought to find no place in the heart of the patriot however irrational they might seem at first sight in the light of his own individual reason. So long as he has not made out a clear case against an institution or belief he has no right to interfere; and in no case can he lightly tamper with the essential ideals and institutions of the people which have grown with the growth of

centuries under the peculiar conditions of the soil, climate and other environments of the country and also under the peculiar intellectual nature and temperament of the people. With the national experiences embodied in history and literature as his guide, he should first direct his efforts to the eradication of the manifest social evils which retard the national progress and to the purification of those institutions which *could* be revived and *made to do useful work* for the good and advancement of the people. And in the case of institutions which, in the reformer's view, are unfavourable to the national progress, but for the removal of which the people are altogether opposed, he should be content to wait, relying upon the spread of enlightenment for the ultimate realisation of his aims and ideals. But in no case can the method of rebellion be justified, inasmuch as it is found in experience to end in creating misery and dissensions in families and communities much to the detriment of their peace, happiness and progress, without in the least accomplishing anything of real and permanent social value.

IMITATION OR ADAPTATION.

(By Prof. M. RANGACHARIAR M A)

INDIA under the supremacy of the English power is passing through a period of transformation which even the most superficial observers may easily make out Although foreign influences of various kinds have frequently enough worked within the heart of Hindu civilisation the way in which modern European civilisation is endeavouring to affect the life and thought of the people of India has certain peculiarly characteristic features about it No other historic influence of an outside origin has been able to produce the same effect on the mind of the people of India as European science and literature are now seen to have done in relation to a good number of persons among the modern inhabitants of the country While all other foreign influences have caused a more or less superficial disturbance in the calm flow of Hindu civilisation, the democratic spirit of modern European civilisation is showing in our midst a tendency to invade and disturb the very source of the ancient stream This is really the cause of the present unrest which is noticeable among those who have come under the influence of Western thought in relation to all the aspects of their life and work and aspirations However, it has to be borne in mind that all those whose heart has been touched by this new magic of modern European enlightenment are less than a mere drop in the vast ocean of the multitudinous life of India Nevertheless, their position in Indian society under

British rule men of education and leaders of thought has given to them a power and consequent responsibility which are much larger in their proportion than what would be justified by the mere numerical strength of those few fortunate persons. Naturally it is these few persons, who have received the new education and have been disciplined in the atmosphere of this new enlightenment that have to take upon themselves the burden of adjusting the historic life of India and her civilisation to her new environments. It must be within the every-day experience of every man, who has to any appreciable extent received Western education in India that moment after moment he is slowly building up his own life as the result of a continuous struggle going on within him between the old and the new. Under these circumstances, it cannot but be a matter of momentous importance to every such person to know exactly what plan of action he has to adopt not only in working out his own life, but also in endeavouring to make it easier for the men and women of his own generation if not for those that come afterwards, to adopt that form of life and only those ideals and aspirations which are most conducive to their true progress and enduring happiness. Two methods readily suggest themselves as being calculated to achieve this end, and they may be characterised as the method of imitation and the method of adaptation. The former of these methods relies too largely on the power of the new enlightenment and the wisdom of the guidance it affords so that next to no account is taken of the resistance of the social organism which is to be moulded anew; while the latter is a method which, believing both in

the adequacy of the old civilisation and the utility of the new steadily endeavours to mou d the old life so as to make it fully capable of deriving benefit from all that is worthy and noble in the new influences of Weste n civilisation. In either case the essential work of these enl'ghtened a id thoughtful few is to try to make the people, on whose behalf all their patriotism and philan thropy are exercised, more and more l a gely amenable to these new influences Otherwise neither of the two processes will be capable of producing the needed adjustment and harmony in relation to the expanding social life of the people It is however, worthy of note that the successful working out of the process of imitation is calculated to give rise to a radical revolution in the end, involving in its sweep the destruction even of all the best and the noblest elements in the ancient fabric of Indian civilisation. But the process of adaptation is by its very nature fitted to conserve all the good features in the past historic life of India, and at the same time to assimilate all that is good in the newly introduced civilization and enlightenment of Europe, so that the new life which is to be so evolved may make for the highest kind of happiness and progress Thus alone, in other words can India's civilisation develop and advance further on the lines of natural evolution.

The soullessness of mere imitation holds true not only in the field of the Fine Arts but also in the historical process of the building up of civilizations The imitator of a new and foreign civilisation may feel satisfied by the freedoms which he acquires in tearing himself away from all old historic associations and

social limitations and obligation; but, in so cutting himself off from the stream of the nation's traditional life he forfeits his title, abrogates his power, and throws away his opportunities to influence for good those very persons for whose advancement he may, for aught we know be devoting the whole energy of his patriotism and love of human well-being. Such imitations may at best i secure in the existing constitution of Hindu society a separate caste of no great significance; and when they do so become a caste they are sure to find it awfully hard to live ■ life of calm serenity and high-minded purity, without the support of traditional restraints and without the sanctions of time-honoured authorities Such ■ drifting caste is not only courting instability and unhappiness for itself, but is also utterly helpless in the way of *serving as an example of any high social ideal* Secession from the parent community is a speedy, though short-sighted process, depending entirely on the will and intelligence of the individual who so *secedes; in its moral effects it is quite suicidal*, inasmuch as it takes away from the seceder all the safeguards of public opinion and social sentiment and deprives him of all the chances of proving useful to his community, *making him the poorer for his having lost* the privileges of being a member of an organized and time-tested community It is needless to say that in trying to run away from the evils which he is impatient to bear, and *incapable* to remove, he is only courting other evils, the nature and magnitude of which he has not sufficiently realized The process of imitation unavoidably leads to secession, and in secession we see the complete sterilization of all effort for

achieving social well-being. In a recent work known as *God the beautiful* we find these very interesting remarks which are so apt and instructive in this context :—"There ■ ■ close relationship of all human beings ■ sharers and helpers in the same great evolutionary process, and organic fellowship of all human souls Although individuality is no doubt ■■ en l in itself, yet it becomes truly itself only as it is contributory; and it therefore must keep the social ideal in sight. We have all evolved together, through the social cultivation of our higher nature. The whole is ■ society of related individuals, whose utility, as well as whose beauty is dependent upon co-operation."

Judged from the standpoint of the high duties of the patriot, whose aim ought to be to serve his fellowmen more than himself, this process of social secession amounts to a crime, the depth of the darkness whereof is in strict proportion to the intellectual and moral capacity of the person who ■■ secedes. But in the process of adaptation there is no such danger to the individual, nor is there any wasteful loss of that moral energy which is intended to work out the welfare of society. It may appear to some that in following this method of adaptation the full force of the individual's moral conviction is not brought to play upon the problem of human progress; and that it is a milk-and-water sort of method, in which neither the right thing is wholly accepted, nor the wrong thing altogether rejected. This criticism looks very plausible, but it is wholly due to the critic not recognising how justifiable and potent ■ factor compromise ■■ in the evolution of man's social life and civilisation. For the enlightenment of such ■ critic we feel we cannot do better than quote the

words of the famous Italian, Mazzini, whom, as he was both a hero and ■ prophet, it is altogether impossible to charge with the want of moral courage :—"Life ■ one ; the individua and society are its two necessary manifestations ; life considered singly and life in relation to others. The individual and society are sacred not only because they are two great *facts* which cannot be abolished and which consequently we must endeavour to conciliate but because they represent the only two *criteria* which we possess for realising our objects, the truth,— namely, *conscience* and *tradition*. The manifestation of truth being progressive, these two instruments for its discovery ought to be continually transformed and perfected ; but we cannot suppress them without condemning ourselves to eternal darkness. We cannot suppress or subalternise one without irreparably mutilating our power. Individuality, that is to say, conscience applied alone, leads to anarchy ; society, that is to say, tradition ; if it be not constantly interpreted and impelled upon the route of the future by the intuition of conscience begets despotism and immobility. Truth is found at their point of intersection. It is forbidden, then, to the individual to emancipate himself from the social object which constitutes his task here below, and forbidden to society to crush or tyrannise over the individual." Thus we have on the high authority of this Italian patriot, who has been worthily characterised as the prophet of his age and country, that it often becomes the duty of individuals in society to subordinate conscience to the authority of tradition, as much as it is the duty of tradition not to stifle the voice of individual conscience Indeed social tradition may be taken

to be based on what may be called the communal conscience of society, it being borne in mind that this communal *conscience* is really the result of an *unconscious* synthesis of the available moral power of all the individual consciences concerned in the process

The above words of Mazzini are of value in indicating to ▬ the relation between the conscience of the individual and the conscience of the community ; they also enable ▬ to understand how between these two kinds of moral power there is no logical contradiction, and how it is by their mutual harmony that true and lasting social progress becomes possible of accomplishment. That such ■ harmonisation of *conscience and tradition* ▬ the *chief aim of the* method of adaptation requires no enlarged exposition ; and the idea that the man, who, instead of breaking away from the authority of tradition, when his own conscience disagrees with it, endeavours to work on tradition so as to make it agree with his own conscience, is ■ moral coward, carries its own condemnation with it. It is much harder to modify and improve the force of tradition than to obey the voice of individual conscience, and thereby make society risk the creation of anarchy therein. It is owing to considerations like these that we have considered it proper to advocate the policy of adaptation in preference to the policy of imitation, in the matter of striving for all social and other forms of progress in our country. To some it may appear that the distinction between the two policies of imitation and adaptation is merely verbal, but to such we wish to point out that, for instance, the endeavour to educate and reconcile the orthodoxy of the woman and the priest, who are still the cus-

todians of our communal conscience, constitutes an essential part of the programme of work to be carried out in accordance with the policy of adaptation while no such endeavour seems to constitute an equally essential part of the work of imitation which is so largely based on the theory of what is called the individual's courage of conviction There are other points of difference also between these plans of work for social well-being; and we believe we are not wrong in thinking that some of them have been to some extent brought out in the remarks made above. To us it appears that the keynote of the ■ and patriotism which is even now flowing out from the life and teachings of the late Mahadeva Govinda Ranade is to be found in his persistent advocacy of the policy of adaptation in preference to the other policy of imitation which unavoidably leads to social secession and all its accompanying discomforts and dangers. If only the exact nature of the difference between these two methods of accomplishing reform is properly appreciated, the flow of light proceeding from such an appreciation will surely illumine the path of the pilgrim reformer to so great an extent as to make him see distinctly, not only the immediate steps of his advancement, but ■ so the distant goal of his humane journey of civilisation.

HINDU SOCIAL REFORM.

(By Mr. K. SUDARSANA RAO, B A.)

ALLUDING to our custom of invoking God Ganesha in the beginning of every religious ceremony, Sir Frederick Pollock bows to the revered name of Aristotle ere he commences his Introduction to the History of the Science of Politics Similarly, no one can, without irreverence, begin to write or speak on Social Reform in India, without first remembering the honoured name o the late lamented Justice Mahadeva Govinda Ranade, the *Guru* of Social Reform in this country, he has been rightly called As I remember Justice Ranade's name, the name of another departed worthy comes uppermost to my lips—that of His Holiness the late Swami Vivekananda. We are yet too near to the loss that the country has sustained by the departure of these two great souls to fully follow the void created in the rank—alas how thin.—of practical workers and sincere patriots. But it is said (with much truth I believe) that great men never die They are immortal The mortal coil which they shuffle off is an illusion, at best an accident and the shuffling off itself means, if we can peep behind the veil of death, a larger and freer life of the spirit which the only reality in this world of change and impermanence. They live and move and have their being in the world they have initiated in the good they have done. Buddha is not dead. Christ is not dead Luther is not dead. Indeed their work may be said to begin, if not to fructify only after their death. It is a most consoling thought that we are not deprived of the inspiration and guidance of our great men by their disappearance from the earthly scene of their labours, and the inspiration I have

received from them and the debt of homage I owe them is at once my reason and excuse for venturing to express my thought on the question of Social Reform

RANADE AND VIVEKANANDA.

The two men I have mentioned are no ordinary men. They were the best types of all that is best and noblest in ancient and modern India. Typical as they were of their generation, they transcended the limitations and the prejudices of the age and were men of powerful thoughts, as liberal and all embracing as the infinite spirit within them. With characteristic differences they had much in common. Mr. Ranade, a man of shrewd common sense, had much faith in patient work and a long continued propaganda, conducted wisely and well, and all along his life gave himself up to the task of making the Social Conference his own pet child which he brought up with the care and prudence of a father, a success. He was never impatient, never quarrelled with those that differed from him, never despaired of success for his cause. In fact he had all the qualities of a successful propagandist (I use the word in its best sense). Swami Vivekananda, a prophet by divine right, moved by that divine afflatus which comes to a man that has realised his spiritual affinity with the Supreme accomplished in a decade what others would have done in a century. He has shown us the road by which we have to travel, the spirit in which the work has to be approached contenting himself only with drawing the outlines, in clear and unmistakable language and leaving the *details to be worked out by each individual and the nation* as a whole, as best as they can. But with this difference the contrast closes. Both were men of keen intellectual perception, broad universal sympathies, and strong iron purpose. Both had probed deep into the past history of the nation, could clearly distinguish the essential from the non-essential in that history, could trace the one purpose towards which, as to a centre, the whole trend of

events in the past has moved, and could clearly point out the one way that is possible for India to take in future. Both had unbounded love for their motherland—a love that was too deep to allow them to [redacted] a harsh word towards her, had immense hope of her potential possibilities that would never allow them to despair of her future. To both, India was the 'Holy Land' and "the Land of Promise." 'I profess implicit faith,' said Justice Ranade, 'in two articles of my creed This country of ours is the true land of promise This race of ours is the chosen race It was not for nothing that God has showered His choicest blessings on this ancient land of Aryavarta.' To both Social Reform meant social advancement on national lines without prejudice to those essential virtues for which the people have been justly famous from time immemorial.

Qualifications of a Social Reformer.

My interest in Social Reform dates from 1894. In the December of that year the Theosophical Convention as well [redacted] the National Congress were held in Madras. We attended the Convention lectures in the morning when Mrs Besant was preaching our Religion and Philosophy with a zeal, a fervour, a felicity, and an eloquence, almost unmatched, as Justice Subramania Iyer then said, and we were transported into [redacted] world altogether beyond our own The National Congress had no doubt called us back to our mundane existence but it sent us back again into a land of political dreams. The Social Conference bore always to me the odour of [redacted] dissecting-house, and I had no mind then to subject the fair living organism of Hindu society, clothed in such rainbow colours, to the cruel knife of a vivisecting reformer. What was my surprise when I [redacted] disillusioned of my fears by the thoughtful and highly ennobling lecture on Social Reform which Justice Ranade then delivered in the Anderson Hall. The one great beauty of Ranade's speeches [redacted] that they always conciliated conflicting opi-

ni ns and never pr vok d ng r or ligr st towards Social Reform Many an opponent l d b on converted into a friend of Reform by the tact and ingenuity with which the s bj ct was pr sent d by him The work of Social Reform is very delicate task. No body would like his faults r shortcomings expos d in public and it is but natural that people should resent any attempt at trifling with the customs and institutions under which they lived so long. But sympathy can accomplish good deal A reverent attitude towards long established usages that served very useful purpose in the past, even if they ceased to do so at present, is one of the necessary qualifications of a reformer. He should never assume dictatorial authority, never be impatient for results, never hasty in action but must be content with having done his duty to the best of his ability with having sowed the seed, leaving the harvest to be reaped and enjoyed by posterity, if it was not ripe for him. He must always be circumspect in what he says or does and above all, his life and conduct must be beyond all suspicion To those who take slight and superficial view of this question of Social Reform, it may conveniently lend itself to invective and indignation, but to those who take a broad and serious view it is perhaps the most solemn and intricate subject possible.

The Meaning of Social Reform.

What is the meaning of this Social Reform of which we so often hear? Indeed, it seems it requires no definition at all So familiar we have been with it And yet a little reflection will show that it is not so easy to define it People have such various notions of Social Reform that their definitions vary with their notions. To some it signifies widow-marriage, to others infant marriage, and, yet to a third, it is a release from the restrictions of caste and creed. But Social Reform with me is another name for *Social Efficiency*. The qualities that go to make up this Social Efficiency are, in the words of Lecky, a pure

domestic life, a high standard of moral worth and of public spirit, simple habits, courage, uprightness and a certain soundness and moderation of judgment which springs quite as much from character as from intellect. They are not qualities of a showy kind but they form the fundamental basis on which the structure of a solid society is to be reared up. A Social Reformer must see what customs and institutions of the country have contributed and do contribute to *any* or *all* of *those* qualities, or are capable of being made to contribute to that end. He must as well strengthen those qualities that are beneficial as remove the n that are not

Eastern and Western Progress

Western — The Principle of Competition.

In the process of acquiring these qualities, the oriental *and occidental peoples have adopted two different methods* 'East is East and West is West' said Kipling Though this statement is no more absolutely true than any other similar statement, it does indeed contain a great truth, and that truth is nowhere else better exemplified than in the process I speak of. The West [redacted] taken to what is called *the law of biological process*, the East to what I may call the *Law of the Higher Life.* The law of biological growth has been thus defined :—" If all the individuals of every generation in any species were allowed to equally propagate their kind, the average of each generation would continually tend to fall below the average of the generation which preceded it and a process of slow but steady degeneration would ensue." To arrest this process of 'all individuals' 'equally propagating their kind' and the consequent 'process of slow but steady degeneration,' the forces of selection and competition are brought into play, and it is at once seen that the play of these forces has not been a new phenomena in the case of man but a natural extension into the human domain of a law operating all through the lower world—vegetable and animal. The law of life is therefore said to

) ' ceaseless and inevitable struggle and competition, ceaseless and inevitable selection and rejection, ceaseless and inevitable progress' Even when man has entered on the stage of organised social life, this process has not been arrested and he remains as powerless to escape from it as the lowest organism in the scale of life This law of Biological Science in the domain of human progress is further confirmation of the two fundamental hypotheses of Darwin's Law of Evolution—the principle of natural selection and the principle of the survival of the fittest The whole history of Western civilization is an illustration of this Law of Progress.

ILLUSTRATION.

Take for instance the Greco Roman civilisation of ancient times. In the case of the small City States of Greece, the whole history is a history of the struggle for existence At first Athens, then Sparta and next Thebes and Macedon had tried to assert their superior power over the autonomy of the smaller States, and they had all their day, till they were subdued by a power stronger than them all the all conquering Rome. The history of Rome itself is a history of the competition for life and power of foreign conquest of subjugation of weaker nations, and of the assertion of the superior civilisation of the conquering nation. Rome was essentially a military State, and when out of the disruption of the old Roman Empire, the modern States of Europe have come into existence, they have inherited, one and all the old idea which the fallen Empire had bequeathed them, and, all through the middle ages, the stress and strain have been kept up in all the countries of Europe It has not ceased to operate in modern times and in more recent times, it is no longer confined to military operations and military life but has invaded even the domain of peace. For what are 'trusts' and combines and other devices of industry of modern times but an illustration of the principle of competition in a subtle but none the

loss acute form? The Anglo-Saxon looks forward, says Mr. Kidd, not without *reason, to the day when* [redacted] *will* cease; but without war he is involuntarily exterminating the Maori, the Australian, and the Red Indian, and he has within his borders the emancipated but ostracised Negro, the English Poor Law and the Social Question; *he may beat his swords into ploughshares, but* [redacted] *his hands the implements of industry prove even more effective and deadly weapons than the swords.*" Such is the drama that is now being enacted before our very eyes in Europe, in America, in Australia, in Africa, and on a smaller scale in Asia. Such is the white man's burden as he conceives it.

All Pervading Nature of Competition.

One might have supposed that the religion of the Teacher that preached 'Love thy neighbour as thyself,' 'turn thy left cheek to him that strikes thee on the right' must have softened the rigour of this struggle. But the truth is the other way. Religion itself has to succumb to the other influence, and become in its turn combative. The militantism of the Christian Church is due to its alliance with this active competitive spirit of the West which it could not overcome. Says Dr. Miller: "You know the energy which characterises the Churches of the West and the missionary societies and missionaries that represent them. If he had moral weights and measures, I do not know whether we should find ninety per cent. or only eighty, but I know we should find the most of that energy to arise not directly from the power of Christ's life or precepts, not from the working of Christ's ideal, but from the working of the old ideal of sacrificing self to secure the success of one's own community, to secure the triumph of the Christian scheme of life over other schemes which are regarded [redacted] its adversaries."

Eastern: its Nature and [redacted] Conditions.

Now the East has found a quite different solution to this problem. Here, [redacted] in the West, there were always

conflicting interests. India has from the beginning been an anthropological museum. When the fair Aryan first came to the country, he found the land in the hands of the dark aborigines, the brown Dravids and the yellow Nagas. Some of these races were civilised and had an organised government and social polity of their own. Others had not. The Aryan had to conquer them, subjugate them and impress on them the stamp of his superior civilisation. Thus has naturally led to war and extermination and in the Vedas and the Epics we read of many a struggle carried on over a pretty long period between the higher and the lower civilisations. But the genius of the people was not for war, and the conditions of life were not favourable to it. Here is a vast fertile country watered by some of the biggest rivers of the world. A bountiful nature easily supplied all the natural wants of man, and rendered his vain struggles for power and dominion. Hence the active energy that characterised the Aryans of the Vedic Age has softened down to a philosophical contentment in the Upanishadic era. The boast of Kings hereafter was that they conquered their internal foes of lust and hate rather than foreign kings and foreign rulers; that they had better sway over their rebellious inner nature than over their external dominion. Their tournaments were philosophical meetings of sages and saints and their glory was the *Swarajya* of their divine souls. Socially, this spirit of noble conservatism led to the caste system and the system of joint family; in religion, it led to the Vedanta.

Let me explain. Once the process of conquest was over and the conquered tribes brought within the pale of Aryan civilisation. The question arose as to what status the newly conquered people were to occupy in the social polity of the conquerors. The increased activity on the conquests themselves led to a division of labour amongst them and the one Brahmin caste which, as the Mahabharata says existed in the beginning, became split up into original three-fold sys-

tem of Brahmana, Kashtriya and Vaisya castes, the division being based on the innate qualities of the people and professions of which they followed in life. Thus those who were of a contented mind pure, austere, and contemplative and were fitted by nature and inclination to the role of preachers and religious preceptors became *Brahmanas*. Men of active temperament strong in body and mind, fit to rule and guide others belonged to the caste of Kshattriyas. Those who raised produce out of the soil and dealt in cattle and commerce were Vaisyas. There is strong reason to believe that though the majority of the conquered were kept in the fourth class of Sudras some of them were admitted to the Vaisya class and a few even to the rank of Kshattriyas. There were no slaves. Interdining was freely allowed even so late as the Mahabharata times, at least between the first three castes. Restrictions as to inter-marriage were as they should be. Promiscuous intercourse was prohibited. But the *anuloma* system has provided for the elevation and gradual amelioration of the lower castes. By this system marriages between the male members of the higher castes and the female members of the lower, were countenanced, and the issue of such marriages assigned the rank of their fathers, after seven generations. Thus necessary precautions in the interest of purity of blood having been taken, all possible concessions have been shown to those that occupied the lower grades in the social ladder. Great room was left for political advancement and the enjoyment of political loaves and fishes. As to moral and spiritual culture, they were the monopoly of no individual or caste. They were the common property of the whole nation, and the members of the higher castes did not consider it beneath their dignity to sit at the feet of the lower castes for learning *Brahmagnana*. Have we not read of the Brahmin that was told to go to a butcher who, in spite of the loathsome nature of his work, discharged it as a matter of duty, and was renowned as a practical saint? Some of the Upanishads owe their

named *Rajarshis* or royal saints, and though we may not go so far as to say with Charles Johnston that the whole literature dealing with *gunas* as wisdom in the outcome of Kshatriya thought in the kingdom of Janaka, where a section is that of Brahmins yet it cannot be gainsaid that the Kshatriyas had a large share in

PRINCIPLE OF 'CONCILIATORY COORDINATION.'

It will be seen that in this case a new law has come into operation and has superseded the working of that law of competition and natural selection which is considered the essential condition of progress in the West. This new principle Professor Ranga Charlu has happily termed '*conciliatory coordination.*' 'Live and let live' has been our policy all along. In the struggle for existence, the weaker have not been allowed to 'go to the wall' as they say, but have been given a place and a rank in the social polity and every possibility for kindly help and gradual elevation was extended to them. The doctrines of karma and reincarnation recommended them to turn to and made progress within their marked limits deep and permanent. No wonder, then, that even in the best days of our national life, the exact method cast was not left at hit or miss. Nay, it has made room as possible for arts and industries by specialising knowledge and thereby facilitating its acquisition by heredity.

It is only that little of orders which caused so violently in ancient Rome and other countries impossible in India, and secured to the land a long era of happy contentment and perfect progress. Above all, it afforded scope for the development of Religion and Philosophy for which the national genius was so pre-eminently fitted. It had its manifest defects of which others were not slow to take full advantage and we had to pay for them a very heavy penalty indeed. But our great consolation is, and has always been, that even our vices leaned and have ever leaned to virtue's side. Our vice had been that we had not developed in secularity enough to look opposition in the face, and repel

[illegible] by force What India has lost the world has gained, and there is no use in indulging in vain regrets.

Illustrations.

Our social and religious reformers of the past, since the time of Buddha, have been actuated, consciously or unconsciously, by this principle of 'conciliatory co ordination' No greater mistake can be made than that the spirit of reform in India is a modern growth due to the inspiring influence of English education. If it is meant, as it evidently is, that the reform movement in modern times owes its origin and growth to the education we receive in School and Colleges it is intelligible But it is a practice ignored that there had been great reformers in the past in this country A recognition and a study of these forerunners in the field of social and religious reform will offer us a true guide in the solution of our difficulties and greatly facilitate our own task of reform. One of such reformers, and one to whom occupies a foremost rank amongst them by virtue of his high renunciation as much as the permanent benevolence he has done to the race, is Buddha. It has become a fashion to represent buddha as an iconoclast, as one that came to destroy the society that existed at his time Nothing can be farther from truth. How can the gentle Prince of Kapilvastu who felt the least pain done unto the least of living things as done unto himself, who preached that hatred should be conquered not by hatred but by love, how can he be said to be an iconoclast. He is said to have hated caste and to have hated Brahmins. There were Brahmins and Brahmins in his days, as they are now, but to the true Brahmin he paid as much respect as he did to his own Bikkshu, and even for the counterfeit article he had not *hatred* but *compassion*. He did not try to confound caste, but to elevate the low caste, and bring to the low casteman the light and love of his new Dharma. He did not want to found a sect or create a new society If sects and societies arose later on in his name it was in

spite of him, and he is in no way responsible for them. Even then, his Church was no militant Church, its Missionaries were no aggressors. Its conquests were not of the sword, but of the spirit.

Another Illustration.

Another great reformer of ancient times was Sankaracharya. One of the proud titles of this famous reformer was 'Sthapanacharya or Sthapaniyacharya or Sthapanacharya, the upholder of the six systems of Religion'. The heterodox systems which were a burden and a menace to the land he swept off the face of India not by force of persecution as it is sometimes wrongly asserted, but by sheer force of argument and philosophical combat. But the other religions which contained the central truth, however incrusted over with error and folly he upheld patiently sifted the grain of truth from the huge chaff of falsehood, breathed a new spirit into them, and made them all subserve the one only aim of proclaiming the eternal truths of the Vedanta. Was not this the best example of the principle of 'conciliatory co-ordination'? Even in modern times, this principle has not been overlooked by our great preachers and reformers. When Swami Vivekananda delivered the message of his country and religion in the noble words 'Help and not fight' 'Assimilation and not destruction', 'Harmony and Peace and not dissension' in the great Parliament of Religions he truly represented the spirit of his religion and civilisation and of the sages that were the authors of both.

A Western Authority on the Principle of Conciliation & Co-ordination.

Even in the West, they are coming to see the grandeur and beauty, not to speak of the justice, of this principle. I have dwelt on this point at so much length, for I believe that the ignoring of this principle has led to a thorough misunderstanding of our whole social history in the past and has given rise to many an error of judgment and many a foolish ambition on the part of our educated

countrymen. I shall content myself with quoting the wise words of Professor Finders Petrie, uttered in the course of an address on "Race and Civilisation," which he delivered as President of the Anthropological section of the British Association. Said Professor Petrie:

"I know that the toleration of anything outside of their own shibboleths is hateful to some people, but I make bold to agree with Paul of Tarsus that in every nation there are men who seek after righteousness, that *elements of good exist in all races, and that our duty is to select and encourage* desirable elements, but never to impose any ideals which are peculiar to our own race, age, or civilisation. I know it, that it is often said that only by clearing away all that is associated with error can we begin to lay out a plan according to our notions. In this again, I prefer to differ, along with that gentleman of Tarsus who preached the non-interference with any customs even with idol offerings provided they did not belie the real belief of the man in the sight of those around him. An appeal to the existing conscience of mankind, a clear statement of practical moral principles, is thus laid down for us as a precedent in the greatest re-adjustment of the moral sense that the world has ever seen. Such a precedent is good because it has proved successful, and such may well be our guide in dealing with *native customs, with rules of conduct, and with* the details of dress and of habits But changes flow from reflection and conviction and then you have reformed a man, and not manufactured an automaton."

These words of mature wisdom are worth their weight in gold and deserve to be treasured up in the heart of every true reformer.

Religious Basis of Social Reform: its Meaning and Importance

The study of the methods of the past reformers of our country teaches us another lesson which we miss in the history of the social development of the Western peoples.

That is another point which makes the East, East and the West, West,—I mean the religious emotion which social progress receives both in this country and in the West. That religion plays a very insignificant part in the social regulations of Western people is a patent fact. A writer in the *Edinburgh Review* remarked "In both countries (i. e, England and America) there is very little of the spirit of Christianity. Jesus is the most discussed but the least understood person in history." A late Archbishop of York declared in one of his addresses that "a State founded on the principles of the Sermon on the Mount cannot last for a week." There is no need for multiplying quotations. With us, on the other hand, it is religion that guides and governs everything. We are truly said 'to live in religion, to move in religion, to eat in religion, and drink in religion.' This inherent spiritual instinct should never be trifled with. It recoils on the heads of those who lay irreverent hands on it and mighty will be the flood of reaction that shall overtake all such attempts. I know I may be told that this is not a peculiar virtue of ours and that the European nations were even more religious in the middle ages and that their present prosperity is due to their release from their religious thraldom of the priest and the creed. How far the unnatural divorce between Religion and Society has been fatal in the West to the best interests of both it is not for me to say. Nor is it untrue that the Westerners, in their impatience for individual freedom of conscience and their protest against the intolerable claims of an infallible Pope, have gone too far in the other direction and are now contemplating a retreat. But whatever be the explanation in the case of Western people, it will never hold good in our case.

Our conditions are different, our beliefs are different, and their operation in practical life is different I do not plead for that outward religiosity which was so much in evidence both here and elsewhere in the middle ages.

Nor do I advocate that the [redacted] of Social Reform should be tackled to some religious sect or organisation, such as the Brahmo Samaj [redacted] the Arya Samaj. Far from it. What I mean, however, is that in the case of reforms that are meant for the *majority of people in this country, they should not* run counter to the cherished belief or the fundamental conceptions of Higher Hinduism or Vedanta [redacted] it [redacted] now called To invoke its inspiring aid would invigorate our hearts and infuse a fresh and bracing spirit into the dry bones of reform. Reform will cease to be mechanical It will become ethical and spiritual "Some work," says Swami Vivekanandji, "through politics, some through Social Reform, some through other lines. With us religion is the only ground through which we can move The Englishman can understand religion even, through politics Perhaps the American [redacted] understand religion, even through Social Reform. But the Hindu can understand even politics when it is given through religion, sociology must come through religion, everything must come through religion"

Social Reform: an Emancipation from the Bonds of Ignorance.

Coming down from the consideration of these general principles, I shall now deal with the various reforms that are needed and agitated for at the present moment and shall try to apply those principles to the solution of the various questions at issue. For convenience' sake, I shall deal with Social Reform under three heads:—the Emancipation of the individual, the Emancipation of woman, and the Emancipation of the conscience. 'Emancipation from what?' you may ask. Emancipation from custom? No. That is not the primary evil. Customs understood and intelligently followed [redacted] harmless, nay positively beneficial. They are themselves the effects, not the cause, of the evil they are supposed to produce. Ignorance, ignorance, and for a third time, ignorance, is the root evil—the

prime source of all misery and suffering. 'Avidya,' says our philosophy (and our experience proves it more than literally true) 'Avidya or Ignorance is the mother of evil.' That is the great giant with which we have to grapple, and God helping, victory shall be ours if we only work hard and true. In this battle, the social and the religious reformers are ranged on one side; whatever may be their tactics, the cause is the same and the victory common. There ought to be no antagonism between them. Fighters in the same cause they are friends and brothers, not enemies.

The Giant of Ignorance.

How to kill this giant of Avidya how to get our Emancipation? The simple remedy, proposed by our Religion and Philosophy and proved efficacious in almost every case where it is properly applied, is knowledge. Bring in the light, the darkness will fly of itself. Get knowledge, ignorance will vanish. Education, however elementary, if it be only of the genuine kind, is the great panacea of all our social evils. It is the only lever that will move the dead weight of custom and superstition. As a schoolmaster, I have great faith in education. It will at least prepare the minds to which we can appeal and appeal with success in the long run. Even if it be less not satisfy all our expectations, it is a thing that cannot be safely neglected. A system of education that not only fills the head but awakens the heart can only solve the whole social problem

The Emancipation of the Individual: Caste System.

Let us see. Connected with the emancipation of the individual is the caste system. On the origin of caste and the purpose it served in the past in our Social Economy, I have already dwelt at length. The essential defect of the caste system is its '*stationariness.*' Its ideal is rest. So long as we had to draw into ourselves and abstain from *outer*

activity, no other system could have ■ usefully served us ■ caste. It has conserved learning preserved our nationality and fostered that fine sense of national pride and self-respect which is best expressed by what the French call noblesse oblige as Miss Noble so beautifully pointed out in her prize essay on caste It, however, seems to ill agree with modern conditions. Now that ■ fresh breath of life blows over our national embers we feel as it in the clutches of ■ giant. We feel the impulse of life within us we know we have to grow but, somehow or other it stand in the way. Not only so, it does ■ positive disservice at the present moment. Its essential virtues have been given up, and its latent vices have a full play now. But it is all easy to find fault with caste, it is all very fine to say that caste is the monster we have to kill But how to kill it? that is the question It is, indeed ■ puzzling question and *no solution seems possible* I *do not*, in the least pretend to solve it but I offer the following as a feasible one neither better nor worse than other solutions. But we have to deal not only with the four fold system of caste as formerly existed but with a regular *maze* of divisions, sub divisions, and further sub divisions carried on with such an ingenious nicety (worthy of a better cause, I should think) that each individual has come to be a caste unto himself. The process, though arrested in certain departments, is going on an astonishingly large scale even before our very eyes A study of the Census statistics will disclose the fact that thousands of hill-tribes and other people who were once outside the pale of caste are daily entering into its folds, and are devising new names for the new sects they are peacefully forming within the all embracing folds of caste. Further, people who occupied till now ■ lower status are assuming, honourable names and are claiming the prestige and privilege of the higher castes. The Vaisyas of the Kistna district are asserting their equal claims with the Brahmins to the performance of

Vedic rites and the privileges of Vedic formula. The goldsmith class have quite made up their minds not to have anything to do with their old devoted name of *Acharla*, and have formed a sincere attachment to their new name of *Viswa-Brahmans*. The fishermen are also following suit and have put on the honourable designation of *Agnikula Kshatryas*. The Rev. M. Goudie puts forward for the pariahs the plea of a decay of virtuous, and says there are people who have a kindly feeling for depressed aristocracies: to such I would suggest that the pariahs are amongst the most ancient of that class in the country, and to that reason alone should lend a place in their generous sentiments. In spite of Shakespeare, there is nothing in a name at least in India.

These movements have a far larger significance than we now dream of. They serve to indicate the way in which the sphinx of caste is going to solve its own riddle and die. Let us not look on this movement with jealousy and silent disdain. Let us not only help it on, or at least, abstain from hindering its free development. Some of our men who have the genius for organisation and the ambition of doing good to their fellow men have here a splendid opportunity for immortalising themselves by espousing the cause of these budding aspirants, providing them with a code of honor and a system of religion that will materially advance their social status and when all the castes have been brought on to a common level of social efficiency, the future reformer will find it easy to fuse them all into one caste. For the present, however, it must remain as a pious wish and a consummation to be devoutly wished for. In the case of those sub-castes where the difference that divides them is more or less nominal if not fanciful an immediate fusion is possible and desirable and nothing stands in the way of its accomplishment except the initiative of [redacted] leading members of the sub-castes who have the courage of their convictions

Intimately connected with the caste question is the question of outcastes. Our treatment of the Parias and other outcastes is anything but creditable to us. It is a serious blot on our civilisation and a standing libel on our vaunted spirituality. If we do not wake up to a sense of our duty to these down-trodden men, and do reparation however tardy, for our past folly and injustice, Nemesis is sure to overtake us if it has not already done so in a measure. The missionary is on the alert, our loss is his gain, our folly is his opportunity.

Foreign Travel

The question of foreign travel has been passing beyond the stage of discussion. In Bengal and Bombay Presidencies foreign travelled Hindus are being freely admitted into society. The recent case of Mr. R. Narayana Iyer must pave the way for the admission of other England-returned gentlemen in our own Presidency. The *Indian Social Reformer* and the *Christian College Magazine* have found fault with him for undergoing *Prayaschitta* ceremony for readmission into society. Mr. Narayana Iyer, had, it must be remembered, lived according to the strict rules of orthodoxy as far as they could be observed in a foreign country and if on his return he obeys the commands of society, to which he had already shown his allegiance by the particular one he took while living a foreign life, I do not find wherein the question of martyrdom can enter in his case, or in what way his conduct is liable to censure. On the other hand he ought to be praised for having resisted the temptation of leading a denationalised life, as most of his class generally do, and much more for having lessened the difficulty in the case of others, less fortunately situated than he. Great praise is due to Mr. T. Ramachandra Row, the retired Sub-Judge of Masulipatam, now living at Ooty, and the late Mr. Srinivasa Sastriar, the talented Editor of *Brahmavidya*, who strained every nerve in carrying on a loyal agitation and representation to Sankara-

change, and prevailed on the Jagat Guru to admit him, that is an example for every true Hindu to follow

FEMALE EDUCATION.

The question of female Education so hugely and intimately connected with the emancipation of women, has similarly passed the stage of discussion. But in the case of the sea voyage question and the question of female education, our work has not ended, on the other hand it may be said to begin now. Now that the need for going out to other countries is recognised and is being felt more pressing day by day, some strong organised effort ought to be made for increasing the facilities of foreign travel, and for proper care and superintendence of the moral conduct of the young men who, loosened from the control of the home, are exposed to the greatest temptations in a foreign land. Care should also be taken to stem that tide of denationalisation which has already set in, in the wake of the foreign travel. Similarly, in the case of female education greater care should be bestowed on the nature of education we have to give to our girls, the syllabus of studies we have to teach them, the kind of moral and religious education which is a great necessity in them more than that of boys and other details connected therewith. Unless our women are educated there is no hope of the reforms being carried out and even if they are carried out, they will not be of much use to us. Miss Besant and Miss Ghosal of Calcutta have drawn up two schemes of education which agree in the main and are really complementary enough for all our practical purposes for a long time to come.

WIDOW MARRIAGE.

With reference to the question of widow marriage, I am one of those that believe that our reformers have made a mistake in giving it so much prominence in the scheme of Social Reform. There is a natural repugnance to the idea of a woman sharing a second bed. This is more or less so

in almost all countries of the world, and here it has been sanctified into a religious duty Every body grows eloquent over it *when it concerns any body but himself*, but when it comes to himself even the best friend has been known to turn into its worst enemy. The movement has done more harm than good to the cause it has espoused. Now that the novelty has worn off, it is fast losing the popularity it once enjoyed with the educated classes, and people now care as much for the marriage of a runaway widow (almost all cases of re-marriage are such) as they care for Christian conversion. A decided reaction has set in in Bengal, the home of Pandit Vidyasagar, and murmurs of disgust and displeasure are audible enough in the Bombay and our own Presidencies. The indiscriminate marriage of grown-up widows has raised an unmeaning prejudice against all widow marriages as such, and has closed the door against the virgin widows whose case alone is truly pitiable. Even here, if permanent success, apart from personal triumph, is desired, the parents themselves must boldly come forward and give away their daughters in marriage. The method of secret abduction and intrigue does not commend itself to me

If instead of allowing our energies being diverted to the question of re-marriage of widows, we had concentrated them on the question of early marriages—a more real and crying evil—we would have been by this time at a measurable distance of success. According to Dr. Mahendra Lal Sircar, early marriage is the greatest evil of our country It has stood, so to say, at the very springs of the life of the nation, and prevented the normal expansion of which it is capable 'This pernicious custom has done,' says the doctor, 'what nothing else could so effectually do, namely, it has deteriorated the once noble and glorious Hindu race—a race that gave enlightenment to the whole world.' Again, he says 'whatever of intellectual and moral qualities we still possess is by inheritance from the past; whatever we have lost we have to thank this custom for against which we are bound

to raise our most emphatic protest. A return to the old system of marrying boys only after the completion of their education — the best solution, and the Universities may very well demand Liberal backleadership from them on whom they confer their B. A. degrees. How this point has escaped the notice of the wise University Commission passes my understanding. In this connection I cannot but commend to all other institutions in India the example of the Central Hindu College that refuses admission to any class below the entrance to married boys.

Party Reform.

To come to the third subject, the emancipation of conscience, nothing can be more important to the social well-being of a nation than the high standard of public and private morality that it upholds. Said Lecky whom I have quoted already in a similar connection "If you would form a wise judgment of the future of a nation, observe carefully whether these qualities are increasing or decaying. Observe especially what qualities count for most in public life. Is character becoming of greater or less importance? Are the men who obtain the highest posts in the nation, men of whom in private life and irrespective of party, competent Judges speak with a genuine respect? Are they of sincere convictions, consistent lives, indisputable integrity? It is by observing this moral current that you can best cast the horoscope of a nation." In this point, we stand in a peculiar predicament at this juncture of our national history. The old restrictions of religion and community are falling off. Their place is not taken by any new ones. To revive social ostracism for moral deviation is impossible in this age of vaunted progress. 'The arm of law cannot reach where robes and furred gowns hide all.' Only the dictates of a self-approaching conscience can check the course of unbridled license. If that still small voice is stifled, only the louder dictum of an enlightened public opinion can cope with it. That enlightened public opinion is still to be

formed in this country ; until it is formed, rest assured that the hope of social salvation is a [redacted] and a delusion.

I have tried to express my thoughts however humble—on this burning topic of the day. Unanimity of opinion on such a topic is impossible and I do not seek for it. If aught in what I have said has provoked thought and set your reader thinking I feel myself highly recompensed. We stand at the parting of ways now The past is disappearing, and we too are moving. But the question is, ought we to follow in the rank and file or are we to hold an honoured position in the vanguard in the march of nations? The whole Indian Social Problem can be summed up in one question. Is the Hindu nation, once so glorious, now so fallen to be once more the mother of arts and literature, the breeder of noble men and time or is it to vegetate and die? The answer to this question lies in our hands and in the way we answer the question, lies the fate of our country.

"Choose well: your choice is
Brief and yet endless
Here eyes do regard you,
Eternity's stillness ;
Here is all fullness,
Ye brave, to reward you ;
Work, and despair not."—*Goethe.*

EDUCATION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF SOCIAL REFORM.

(BY Mr S KRISHNASWAMY AIYANGAR M.A M R A S.)

MUCH has recently been said about Social Reform and a lively discussion is kept up concerning it. There is certainly no doubt that there is much that is not desirable in the present which must be made to give way. The only difference so far noticeable seems to be as to how to bring about this desirable consummation. There are several that are for reform of the root and branch sort, and if past history teaches us anything about Hindu civilization it is that such enthusiasts are doomed to disappointment. No reform can be possibly effective unless the want of the reform is felt before the reformer comes in. It is, therefore, very essential that people understand the evils they suffer from that they may know the evils and knowing, learn to think of getting rid of them. There are many evils which affect seriously only small sections of the Indian community. These might lie over for the present; and reformers would do well to attend to the more general drawbacks just now. Every one will readily admit that the reform cause will be best served when reform proceeds on the lines of least resistance. So then, it is incumbent on reformers to take up first of all those questions in their programme which provoke the least opposition and which touch, as it were, the outer fringe of religion.

To give an instance of what I mean, it is desirable before thinking of bringing about the remarriage of

virgin widows, to think of pushing up the age at which girls could be married. This latter reform is likely to be opposed much less than the other—why in fact, a reform of this sort is silently taking place and people do understand the reasonableness of this. We have let our virgin widows suffer these thousands of years and there is no reason to be in such a mortal hurry about their salvation as the reformers' would have it. These virgin widows no doubt deserve every man's sympathy, but the help that we propose to offer to them ought not to be a curse in the guise of a blessing either to them or to society It introduces only another element of disorganization in society, if the change be brought about without the people being prepared There is many an other evil easily remediable if only taken up in sympathy with society as it is, and not brought forward in that superior fashion which misguided enthusiasts generally assume, when they make an attempt to persuade, as they think. Any violent attempt at reform without a sympathetic public opinion tends more to throw back reform than to accelerate it Talking of reform it will be instructive to learn how Hindu rulers in India attempted it and here is an instance ready to hand, which is an attempt to put down one of the evils under which even now certain sections of the community labour—namely the question of 'selling' boys, and girls, of which a quite discreditable instance was given in a recent issue of the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* A father of two girls (having no other children) offered one of them in marriage to a graduate young man through his father, who graciously demanded Rs. 8000 only in consideration of the girl becoming heiress to one half

of her father's property On finding however, that the father of the girl was quite a young man who might be blessed with more than one son during the years he might yet have to live, he broke off the proposal summarily This evil is very widespread and prevails almost in every province to a greater or less degree This is a state of things which might well be put down and nobody will mourn its disappearance not even the prospective bridegroom as his turn to suffer must sooner or later come Here is how the Vijayanagar rulers attempted the storm:--In the Saka year 1347 "while the illustrious Vîrapratâpa Dêvarâya Mahârâja was pleased to rule the earth the great men of all branches of sacred studies of the kingdom (of) Padaividu drew up in the presence of (the God) Gopinatha (of) Ankapushkarini a document (which contains) an agreement fixing the sacred-law According to (this document), if the Brahmins of this Kingdom of Padaividu *i.e.* Kannadigas, Tamilas Telingas and Lâlas (of Lata or Gujarat) &c of all Gotras, Sûtras and Sâkhas, conclude a marriage, they shall, from this day forward, do it by Kanyâdâna *i.e.*, both those who do not adopt Kanyâdâna *i.e.*, both those who give girls away after having received gold, and those who conclude a marriage after having given gold shall be liable to punishment by the king and shall be excluded from the community of Brahmins. These are the contents of the document which was drawn up' This mode of action shows clearly that even our despotic Hindu rulers acted only on the general consensus of opinion in condemning an institution. Our present circumstances do not allow of reforms being brought about by an alien Government, whose action

in these matters will not receive the like support from the people The first essentia of all reform therefore is the creation of a healthy and widespread public opinion, which at present we mig t almost say does not exist for various reasons. The old respect for caste authority is as good as gone and the English educated among us have not earned their title to not as leaders in religious or social matters. It would seem, therefore, quite necessary that the people should be educated and unless they are brought to understand what reform means there is not much chance of reforms bearing permanent fruit.

One of the chief obstacles to reform even on a small scale is the ignorance of our women But woman or man, the education given must be on national lines; and unless it is so, no amount of education is likely to exert much influence for good. The first step, therefore in social advancement is the establishment of Indian schools conducted on national lines and instruction given in them in the Vernacular and in Sanskrit, so that enlightenment and knowledge might filter down to the masses The good result of such education may be seen clearly in a generation. Every one now notices the change in the attitude of the public mind towards female education wherever there are Girls' Schools About ten years ago, it would have been considered the height of sauciness in a woman to wish to send her girl to school or for the girl herself to say that she was educated. Mothers now-a-days take a pride in their girls being educated and consider it a point of honour to be able to say that their daughters are accomplished. This is observable only in the higher classes of people in towns. By this change brought

about in the course of a short time- very short indeed in a nation's history - if it be only more general than it is, we would have a good start in the social amelioration of India. We can bring about this change if only people could be made to feel the necessity for it and this again could be done if each educated man makes an attempt to disseminate ideas of the usefulness of education as far as he could do it by writing, speaking, and otherwise doing what he could in the matter. The temples and mutts of an earlier time were centres of education and if our accounts of the lives of our reformers may be trusted they all learned and taught in these temples, each one of which had a seminary attached to it Times have now changed and mere Pathasalas will not do It is also a great pity that the so-called 'payal schools' have gone out of existence in several places and no other school has taken their place. If then each big temple, and mutt or a number of temples, if of humbler means, should maintain ■ school of its own where the local Vernacular and Sanskrit could be taught up to a pretty high standard, the day will not be far off when we can feel proud of having ■ system of education which will foster national sentiment and do all that education can do to do away with the incrustation of evil in our social system. No one in society excepting ■ few of the like mind, will pay much attention to what a so-called reformer says unless the people know that the man who addresses them and acts on his own conviction is himself one among them, but not ■ product of foreign influences attempting to overthrow the foundations of Hindu civilisation. Truly all that is good in

thought or in opinion is not the monopoly of the English read Indian and if those who are not English educated claim consideration, it ■ but just that they do so Mutts, like the one at Tiruvadudorai near Kumbakonam, maintain a number of students, feed them and give them the education available there What is wanted, therefore, ■ that the authorities of the mutts as well as the temple committees should endow schools and place them on ■ stable system with a broader and more liberal syllabus of studies independent than what has been in vogue in such schools hitherto Wherever there are no temples or mutts schools will have to be started on the indigenous system and to complete the usefulness and work of these there must be considerable activity in providing them with works in the Vernacular embodying whatever new ideas have been assimilated by those who have passed through ■ course of University education The renovation and the rejuvenation and wider promulgation of indigenous learning, therefore, are of the utmost consequence Happily there are some signs of activity in that line which, let ■■ hope, will bear fruit, in the near future. One word must be said here in justice to the reformers who have been several times referred to by me here. It is not our idea to underrate their services; nor is it our object to damp the spirit of those who have made considerable sacrifice in acting up to their convictions All that we wish to point out is that they constitute but ■ drop in the ocean and that so far as any reform of ■ wide, and far-reaching character is concerned, it must proceed on the lines of least resistance and have always ■■ its side the sympathy of the great bulk of the people who are thereby to be improved and made happier.

RENUNCIATION AND REFORM

(By Mr T. V. SESHAGIRI IYAR, B.A., B.L.)

The daily worship of an orthodox Brahmin concludes with a beautiful hymn which may roughly be translated thus -" neither riches, nor offspring, nay, not even good deeds will bring men immortality. It is by renunciation alone that men can become immortal." The wisdom of characterising good deeds as of no avail may at first sight appear doubtful. In the Hindu theology the man that does any good in the hope that its resultant effects may conduce to ulterior benefits to him either in the life or in the life to come is not emancipated from the bonds of rebirth— that is one of the cardinal teachings of the Bagh avad Gita The Anugita says, " Actions must be so performed that the not of enjoyment does not attach itself to the doer, just in the same way that the sun's rays do not attach themselves to the sky." Even in the performance of commendable actions there must be renunciation. Thus is the key-note to Eastern asceticism : It is not the self-denial of the capricious fanatic that is asceticism Nor is it the pretentious self-immolation of the misguided devotee, the end of it being a prospective reward of some kind or other. These are not ascetics as the Hindu knows them. The ascetic while renouncing everything for himself lives for the good of mankind. He has no thought of self, but is sensitive to fellow-suffering, impatient of wrong and intolerant of abuse. Whether we regard the Puranic legends as having a substratum of truth or as simply pointing to

the ideal which the people should have in mind there is no doubt that in them we find mention of persons who were ideal ascetics. Kings were afraid to do injustice, householders dared not to commit wrongs and all classes and conditions of men were anxious to lead lives of purity and of goodness, lest their injustice, their evil deeds and their dereliction of duty should come to the knowledge of these ascetics whose displeasure they were eager to avoid.

The asceticism of the West is of a different type—it is called altruism, philanthropy. The philanthropist renounces nothing He denies to himself no pleasure; but he is anxious to assuage the suffering of others, he devotes his energy and his purse to the amelioration of the condition of those that are unable to take care of themselves and he is pleased at being the instrument of so much good and of so much happiness to others. The philanthropy of the West is a species of self-affirmation and is rooted in a subtle form of egoism It is associated with no renunciation on the part of the doer and generally springs from the egoistic motives of ambition, vanity or hope of some return here or hereafter The principle "Do good by stealth and blush to find it fame" is conspicuous by its absence in the operation of this much vaunted Western virtue whereas it is the basement on which the Eastern ideal of work is built. It is said that the end of life to an Eastern ascetic is "not action, but contemplation—being as distinct from doing." As we pointed out in the beginning, the ascetic eschews not action, but action's fruits and we therefore cannot agree with him in his condemnation of Eastern asceticism. Look at Sankara and Ramanuja.

Both of them were ideal ascetics and both of them were men of intense energy and action. In their cases there was both self-denial and action. Look at the marvellous story of Sri Krishna, typical of every kind of asceticism. He proclaimed his mission to be the protection of the good and the punishment of the wicked; and His ideal life was one of continuous action. But it was action in which there was the renunciation of self at every stage of it. We wish our reformers will bear these ideals in mind in attempting to reconstitute society If reformers will only think less of themselves they would have been a power in the land. To-day a man gets his widowed daughter married and to-morrow he complains that the whole world is not at his feet proclaiming him from the house tops [redacted] one of the greatest heroes and noblest martyrs of this world Such men can do no good to any country. In truth, the methods of reform and the men who have advocated it have both been at fault. Social Reforms have become impossible of achievement in this country for a long time to come, because of the methods adopted The Hindu knows what self-sacrifice [redacted] and he is accustomed to the idea of self-renunciation He cannot for instance see very much of either in widow remarriage. It is not a reform which can appeal to him with force. The welfare of the country is not wound up with the remarriage of every girl widow. In other countries women have rebelled against the notion of remarriage. There is something egoistic, something very unspiritual in thus placing in the forefront of the Reform movement this question of remarriage of widows This particular reform is opposed to the genius of the people and their

traditions ; and as a result of this mistaken zeal, social reform has been put back at least half a century. It is idle to contend that we can sit with folded hands in the belief that no change is called for in the usages and practices of the people. There is a growing demand for great and lasting reforms Our environments are changed ; our habits have undergone modification, and we must move along new lines and adjust our equipments to new requirements But it would be folly to endanger the whole cause by false notions of reform and by false ideas of the exigencies of the situation And reform should proceed on national lines and on lines of least resistance The people have to be educated to appreciate the change and to take to it kindly. Their ideas of life of the objects of existence etc., should not receive a rude shock by the theories of the reformers ; and the men that will lead them on to change their habits and customs to renovate the old and to reinvogorate those that exist should be of them and not those who have no sympathy with them They must be in short ascetics Not that they should don the yellow garb and pretend to an ideal of existence to which they are strangers They should be men who have no thought of themselves. Gautama Buddha, Guru Nanak, Chaitanya and Kabhu Das were of this stamp. The social reform movement must be dominated by personalities of this type. The country has been scared by the methods of reform already pursued. A feeling of aversion has been created towards the cause ; and the movement has received a great blow. We do not despair In every great cause some mistake are committed, and these very mistakes enable the succeeding generation to avoid the pitfalls and dangers

incident to the situation and to move along the path of safety and promise. We see everywhere a feeling of discontent with existing things. We find that there is a feeling of annoyance in general towards those who have mismanaged the movement. There is a keen desire that attempts should be made to repair and reconstruct many a time-honored institution. The people will not stand any wanton destruction of anything that they have been accustomed to. But they will not resent their beautifying and renovation. All these must be the work of those whose ideal is the renunciation of self. They alone can lead in this country and it is to their lead that we are looking up. The time is ripe, the mistakes of the few have cleared the ground and we feel not that are long the lead in such movements will be taken by men who love the country, and its institutions, who know the people and understand their aspirations and last but not least who have no ideas of self-aggrandisement and of perpetually being on the look out for audation and applause

COURAGE OF CONVICTION

(BY A. SUBRAMANYA IYAR B A I T)

WE are reminded every moment that we ought to have the courage to enunciate our convictions and ought to act up to them wi hout fear of howns and apart from all selfish considerations The taunt is often flung in our teeth that we are cowardly and lack the moral courage to give distinct expression to what we are convinced of and to do al that may lie in our power to give effect to t hose conv ctions, particularly when such practical action is believed to contribute to the greatest happiness of the greatest number. We now propose to inquire what those circumstances are under which alone the exercise of the individual's courage of convic tion is likely to be of any benefit either to the individ ual hi nself or to the socie ty the greatest happiness of which is so fondly cherished by him as as well as by others as the ideal of all human conduct.

The first question that may be asked in connection with the inquiry is, how do convictions generally arise? It is a well-known fact that from the earliest years man goes through a process of education which does not cease until his energ are spent up and he is utterly incapable of receiving anything new or to benefit in any manner by what he receives. This education means at the beginning nothing more than the mere reception of external impressions, and the cultivation of the senses through which alone such impressions are received. In this stage, the mind does not

and cannot make any independent effort to know the truth of things. The next stage is one of fortifying the mind with certain powers and with the common materials of knowledge to enable it to fight out its future battles with any measure of success; and now it is that truths forming the inheritance of the generation from its predecessor are required to be assimilated and are assimilated without much protest. In this stage the mind does make an independent effort to learn things for itself, but owing to the immaturity of its development and the inadequacy of its data, it finds itself unable to estimate the practical value of the truths offered for acceptance and to ascertain their validity. The subsequent stages of education are stages of a steadily increasing conflict between the developing reason and the forces of society constituting the machinery of education these forces being in some cases organised and in others unorganised It is not meant that these stages are definitely marked out from each other, that while the earlier stages are in progress there is absolutely no display of the activities belonging to a later stage. The juvenile query, which is often very difficult to answer, and which illustrates the desire not to accept anything without a reason, shows that the stages of mental development overlap one another and are not clean cut and definite What is meant is, that in the progress of education a special stage is reached when there are unmistakable signs of an earnest and independent endeavour to know the truth of things, when reason, not content with yielding unquestioning obedience to authority, sifts the facts at its disposal, generalises and strives to know how far the truths it is called upon by authority and tradition to accept are in

agreement with those which it reaches by its own efforts Truths imbibed in earlier years are now recalled for revision, and subjected to the searching scrutiny of inexorable reason.

It will here be obvious to every thinking person that reason can be considered competent to perform this very important function unerringly, only when its development is marked by certain special characteristics We are not here concerned with that Divine Reason which is believed to be lodged in the mind of every man and which is able, as if at a glance to perceive its prototype in the world of reality constituted by relations so as to form a system Such a Reason ought never to err, and even when it finds itself in unpropitious surroundings, ought to be able to seize without an effort whatever holds universally in reality. But examples of such instinctive and unerring grasp of universal truths are absolutely wanting. We are thus concerned only with human reason, with reason in the course of development and not with an already perfected Absolute Reason. Our imperfect human reason has already gained a certain measure of insight into nature's operations, and the task of every individual who is a unit of any particular society is now confined to the acquirement of what has already been achieved and to the investigation of new truths, speculative and practical, on the basis of past achievements

Social problems cannot be solved with that ease and readiness with which the problems of Physics or those of Botany can be solved. The forces working in society towards an end are not only numerous, but varied and complex, many of them developing new

phases in the course of their operation, so that it is a matter of insuperable difficulty to take account of them all, to know their exact measure, and to deduce from them a result that will correspond to actual facts. And when the question relates to the shaping of some of those forces themselves (*i. e.*, when men have to be educated and their actions regulated with a view to achieving a change in the social organism, the difficulty is enhanced by the consideration that we are often unable to know how best to modify them so as *not to* injure the collective life of the social organism; indeed we can never be sure that a certain modification, which we have effected, is not likely to develop a new evil more serious than the one which we are trying to eradicate.

However, it may be said that a truth ought to be accepted as certain when the practical results which its adoption may yield are such as help on the realisation of the supreme end of human existence. This is perfectly true; but this is the very thing which it is most difficult to ascertain. We ought to accept those principles of conduct only as true the practical adoption of which *alone* duly conduces to the working out of such changes in society as bring it a step nearer to the goal that it has to reach. But what our social ideal has to be and whether a particular practical action dictated by a specially favoured principle does, or does not, help on its realisation, are questions in regard to which there must surely be differences of opinion. Regarding the first of these questions, it seems evident that self-sacrifice of a greater or less amount is an essential element present in all the ideals that have been recommended for adoption. Every

individual in society is expected to sacrifice certain of his pleasures if he is to serve that society efficiently as one of its members. This capacity of each individual for self-sacrifice we may call his *social efficiency*. Social progress is essentially an ethical progress, and this moral virtue is the essential feature in the progress of all human civilization. Greater consolidation of society is the result of greater self-sacrifice and greater self-restraint being aimed at by all its members and as far as possible practised by them. It is not meant that the individual should enjoy no freedom and that he should not aim at his own pleasures. But what is meant is, that he need not be specially taught to do so. He enjoys freedom and pursues pleasure by a law of his own nature. Hence for the up-keep of the society in which he lives and for his own happiness, self-sacrifice and self-restraint have to be distinctly set up as aims in relation to all his conduct. After a good training in self-restraint, each individual becomes qualified to enjoy freedom consistently with the like freedom of others. By virtue of the self-sacrifice and self-restraint he has practised, he becomes qualified to rise to the rank of a leader on any emergent occasion which the varying conditions of his society may develop and may thus be instrumental in saving it from disorganisation or even from total destruction. Hence self-sacrifice ought to be distinctly set up as the aim of conduct though the limitations under which it need be practised may also be indicated. It is wrong to suppose that the whole would will come to an end that life will become extinct, if sacrifice is set up as the end, if the self-accounting factor in the struggle for existence is not allowed to play its part in

life's progress. What is contended is, that this factor being far too powerful to be overcome, the part that it can be allowed to play in civilized life can be successfully played only when the counteracting factor of the struggle for the life of others is strengthened and allowed a free scope for operation. And this conception as we have said, is found in all the ethical ideals known to history.

Even Secularism which starts from the standpoint of the individual's pleasure, and which ignores the necessity of any religious sanction for morality, *must* recommend self-sacrifice and lay special stress on it too, as the pursuit of the individual's own pleasure is natural to the individual and as no special motives need be supplied for the same. It may perhaps formulate the conditions or limitations under which alone such a self-sacrifice need be practised in order to allow full scope for the pursuit of pleasure. If, however, we understand the enlightened Utilitarian ideal to imply the sacrifice, on the part of every individual, of the immediate but fleeting pleasures and the pursuit of the more remote but lasting ones, then it is difficult to avoid what seems to be only the logical consequence of such a conception, *viz.* that the progressive expansion of the intellect must lead to the gradual discarding of the pleasures which were once regarded wrongly as worthy of pursuit, and must eventually take us to the highest bliss attainable which, in whatever manner it may be conceived, undoubtedly involves the greatest amount of self-sacrifice possible.

The virtues recommended to be practised are all such as conduce to the willing renunciation of the pleasures of the lower self in favour of those that relate

to the higher self. Such is also the essence of the religious ideal in Hindu civilization Mukti is knowledge of the Brahman; the knowledge of the Brahman is supreme bliss; and it is attained by a renunciation of the pleasures which life can afford this being necessary for escaping from the pains which it can inflict. It is thus seen that the religious end is also self-sacrifice though from a different point of view it is usually spoken of as self-realization

Self-sacrifice in smaller or greater amount being thus universally conceived to be the essential ethical element in all ideals of human progress, the question comes up for consideration, how far is it possible to know that the adoption in practice of a certain principle is, or is not, conducive to the realization of the fittest social ideal? Is individual reason competent to settle this fact? If so whose reason? If not, how is the thing to be settled at all? Now, whatever requires self-restraint and thus goes against a common tendency of human nature is apt to be thrown overboard and wholly discarded. Hence everything that is dictated by the individual's judgment as conducive to what seems good in his eyes cannot be accepted as ethical The ordinary individual's reason is in the course of development and cannot be relied on to give accurate results. Even in regard to matters which are very simple, it has been known more often to err than to hit at the right mark. The general knowledge at the disposal of the individual which is to constitute the basis of such judgments is far too scanty to enable him to take all possible views of the question, to consider it in all its relations. Secondly, the knowledge of the history of the particular civilization in

relation to w ose matters he ventures to form such judgments ■ usually ap to be vitiated by personal predilection Thirdly, the knowledge of the history of the other civilizations that have been developing on other lines which is necessary for comparison, contrast and verification is also rarely found to be tainted or wanting Fourthly, the power to resist temptations, in the absence of which any judgment in regard to practical matters is apt to be warped by the unconscious importation into it of an undue selfish element is not generally possessed to any appreciable extent Fifthly scientific training in the deductive and inductive methods of research by the employment of which alone ethical and social problems can be solved and principles ascertained is found absolutely wanting. Sixthly a knowledge of Psychology and Sociology which is so very essential for estimating the nature and amount of the various forces that are at work in society is not deemed an essential qualification for dealing with social questions by those that would venture to propose reforms for increasing the *opponents* of men and for diminishing them *pones* In the absence of any one of these qualifications, no man has any right to force his individual judgment upon others and induce them to act in conformity with that judgment without waiting for a considerable confirmatory evidence of its accuracy from those that possess the qualification in which he is wanting Men of light and leading possessing most of these qualifications if not all, may co-operate, compare notes supply each other's deficiencies and may thus be competent to arrive at correct practical principles and to estimate their value in relation to the Society's ideal. But the unaided understanding of a single individual

is utterly incompetent to deal with social questions in any satisfactory manner. It is not denied that now and then an astute individual may perceive that a certain social organ is out of joint and needs repair; or that certain parts have outgrown the rest so that a little chafing, planing, or embellishing has to be done. But the method of accomplishing these things without causing unnecessary misery, without paving the way for a relapse into the primitive state of pure selfishness which *is sure to disorganise and destroy the very foundations* of society without offending against the genius of the civilization that is a task which is in our opinion, beyond any particular individual's powers to apprehend and to execute. Even when men of the right sort come to go hand in hand the methods by which they may chalk out cannot be put into execution unless men's minds are previously prepared for adopting the proposed change. No reformer can ever succeed unless a general feeling is first cultivated in favour of the reforms which he wishes to introduce; and then, if the movement is set on foot, it will not be said that the good that is intended to be achieved by the proposed reforms is more than counterbalanced by the total of misery that might be caused by means of their introduction. In the light of his own unaided reason, a man may feel thoroughly convinced that a certain reform is urgently needed for restoring a certain preponderance of good over evil in society; but he does not thereby become entitled to carry it out at once even so far as he can do so. *Courage of conviction* in such matters seems to be utterly meaningless. A young reformer *feels* that he is right in thinking that widow remarriage is good for his society, and straightway proceeds to

many a young widow, because, as it is explained, he has the courage of his conviction. This kind of misapplication of a wholesome virtue is most pernicious and demoralising. It may here be asked, suppose a man who is best qualified to judge in such matters thinks that a certain reform is urgently needed but finds that he cannot secure the co-operation of the people, how is he to behave? Is he not to carry out his conviction? As already pointed out, he ought to move in the matter of educating those around him to see the necessity of the reform in the same way in which he has himself been educated to see it. Let him act out his conviction if he likes; but he must bow to the decision of his community, and suffer what wrath they may inflict upon him. It is difficult to subject oneself to restraints, but it is easy to break through them. If a restraint has to be broken through in order as it may be said, to maintain the preponderance of good over evil in society, it must be done only after providing that in the act itself other evils are not involved such as are apt to prodnce in the long run quite the opposite result. Let not any man therefore confidently say that *in working out a reform he is exercising the courage* of his conviction. Individual reason cannot be permitted to mould of itself the convictions and practices of mankind as a whole. Where there is really so much difficulty in knowing certainly that our convictions are correct, as there is in the case of all serious social problems connected with the life and character of *any great and long-lived civilisation, it is safer to rely* on the collective wisdom of the Community as a whole than on the authority of the individual's reason. We cannot conclude better than by quoting from a chapter

in Balfour's Foundations of Belief where the author who is now the Prime Minister of England discusses at length the relative claims of Authority and Reason on the convictions and conduct of mankind 'Suppose for a moment a community of which each member should deliberately set himself to the task of throwing off so far as possible all prejudices due to education; where each should consider it his duty critically to examine the grounds whereon rest every positive enactment and every moral precept which he has been accustomed to obey; to dissect all the great loyalties which make social life possible and all the minor conventions which help to make it easy; and to weigh out with scrupulous precision the exact degree of assent which in each particular case the results of this process might seem to justify. To say that such a community, if it acted upon the opinions thus arrived at, would stand but a poor chance in the struggle for existence, is to say far too little. It could never even begin to be; and if by a miracle it was created, it would without doubt immediately resolve itself into its constituent elements"

WOMAN'S LIFE IN THE ARYA HOME.

BY PROF. K. SUNDARARAMA AIYAR, M.A.

SELF-ORGETFULNESS and self-denial form the keynote to the position which woman occupies in the Arya home. As daughter, as sister, as wife and as mother, the Arya woman lives to make the home a temple of peace purity, and patience. The privilege of loving service is all she asks for, and yet the unquestionable fact stares us in the face that her influence in the home is at least as great as that exercised by her Western compeer under a civilisation widely different in aim and aspect. The secret of this influence lies in her beautiful life of self-devotion to all that makes for the best interests of her home and for the preservation of its prosperity and serenity. "He who loses his life shall find it." "Enjoy life by resignation." The Arya woman offers the most impressive exemplification of the eternal truth of these words of ancient wisdom.

This sweet and strong disposition to self-sacrifice is *partly* the product of the long evolution of character which has taken place in accordance with the precept of the sacred law (*dharma*) which assigns to woman in every stage of life a position of dependence,—upon the father during girlhood, upon the husband in middle age, and upon the son in advanced life; it is also *partly* the causal basis of the sacred precept itself, for woman's capacity for suffering and service is as much a part of her nature as her physical weakness and her inclination to live more in the present than in the future. It is the peculiar—the transcendent—merit of our sacred law

in its pristine purity tha it follows the course of nature and reality in its regulation for the organisation of the home and society. That the nature of woman makes for this life of loving service even at the price and risk of suffering is admitted throughout the civilised world and we know of no society in which any appreciable number of women have distinguished themselves by [redacted] life of action, originating in the irrepressible exercise of strength and vigour. In the absence of the endowments of nature needed for the growth of [redacted] self-conscious personality it is certainly to be expected that law and custom should lay hold of the beautiful womanly gift of self-forgetfulness and self-sacrifice and give it the environment needed for its perfect development, *viz.*, [redacted] life of honourable dependence on man.

Honourable dependence, certainly! For the dependence of woman in the Arya home does not mean a life either of rank ignorance, or of slavish subjection. It is freely supposed and assumed, *first*, that Arya women have no knowledge of any kind on any matter of practical importance for our race, and *secondly*, that they are merely [redacted] many chattels or beasts of burden utilised for their own purposes by a race of exceptionally brutal and savage men. On both these points—as on several others—it is well that the truth should be made known, and that [redacted] often as possible. But before dwelling on these points it is well to mention one great fact which necessarily imposes limitations on the life ideals and occupations of Hindu women. We, Aryas, believe [redacted] already stated, that, as [redacted] life of dependence—not one of degradation or slavery—is the only one natural and worthy for women, their interests, their acquisitions, their activities, their opportunities for earning

distinction, should be confined to the home We believe that if women engage in social activities and avail themselves of the opportunities for earning wealth or renown, which the wider sphere of public life offers, this state of dependence which is so valuable in our eyes and so suited to her essential disposition can no longer be a reality. Let us now take up the two points mentioned above.

Are our women kept ignorant of what they *need* to know for fulfilling worthily the functions appropriate to the sphere of life allotted to them by sacred law and by custom sanctified by ages of observance? If they are, no doubt great blame would attach to the Aryas and to the authorities they follow in ordering their homes. The home being the only recognised sphere of women's work and influence, we find that, as a matter of fact, they know all that is essential for housekeeping They may not know the *scientific principles* of sanitation cookery theology aesthetics ethics music and so on But they know a number of elementary and essential rules as to how to keep the house and its surroundings clean; they can prepare the simple meals which form the daily fare of the Arya home; they are well acquainted with the Arya decalogue; they know the leading religious ceremonials in which they are to take part with their husbands, or by themselves, to the minutest detail; they know how to adorn and furnish up their homes on festival days according to the simple and traditional methods which are still current and common in our society, such as, for instance, drawing *Kolams*, etc; they know, either by direct study or by hearing sacred recitations, the leading Itihasas or traditions regarding the divine incarnations and the teachings of the

sages regarding the duties of daily life; they can sing the songs which are appropriate to the parts they have to play during marriages and other festive occasions, and several are also taught the musical art more elaborately and fully and in this manner the list may be indefinitely prolonged. It is nothing but a gross fiction of calumny to assert that, because Arya girls do not receive such an education as is calculated to convert them into, like many of our boys, discontented quill-drivers, verbose platform-speakers, briefless lawyers and rapid social reformers, they are necessarily kept ignorant and are engaged in leading useless and abominable lives. Even as matters stand, there are many highly capable women who are the ornaments and guardian-angels of our homes and command the genuine respect of all their near relatives even though their names are quite unknown to the outside world for the simple reason that they do not care to be known and their interests lie altogether in a sphere of life with which it is, in their view and in ours nothing short of impertinence for the outside world to concern itself. But the great majority of respectable Arya women are quite satisfied with a humbler limit of attainable knowledge, for that is quite sufficient for the due performance of their functions within the household.

Secondly, is it true that Arya women are kept in a position of intolerable subjection akin to that of the Negro slave? Not at all. Whoever truly knows the Arya home knows well that woman's influence is all in all in settling all the most important transactions of our domestic life. It is worth while to state some of the facts so as to enable those who wish to know the

truth to judge for themselves how far the chattel theory of Arya womanhood holds good In the determination of matrimonial alliances woman's voice is decisive In these days we hear frequent complaints that in Hindu marriages the area for choice is so strictly limited that parents have much trouble in selecting suitable bridegrooms for their daughters Do we not owe it to the fact that a thousand and one considerations of caste, family reputation, domestic custom, personal predilection &c, influence our women in making choice? All the new enlightenments of the educated patriarchs are powerless against the determined and age-old conservatism of the communicated and despised *chattel*. It is true, of course, that the husband is the lord and prophet of the Arya wife; and indeed there may be cases where his will determines all for good or evil, as sometimes happens especially with our modern educated men with their new-fangled ideas of chivalry and progress But we are here to point out the actualities of our traditional home-life, and it is nothing but the plain unvarnished truth that, by best efficient observance of the injunction as to wifely effacement, the Arya matron has paradoxically enough, risen to unquestionable dominance in the conduct of the home. Next, the scale of domestic expenditure in almost all Hindu homes is determined by the dominating voice of women. House-keeping is here as elsewhere the special province of womankind and often our new men have been known to struggle for years without success before the family tradition jealously guarded by the women of the household can be set aside so as to adopt a standard of living more in consonance with their altered circumstances of prosperity. Then, the rela-

gious life of the household is, in an especial manner guarded and dictated by our women in accordance with the family traditions so dear to their conservative instincts. The modern educated man's radicalisms and agnosticisms fade away in a dim phosphorescence before the luminous apparition of a determined Hindu woman's pious devotion to her ancestral rites, customs, and beliefs. There are daily, fortnightly, and annual ceremonies in each Hindu household, and divine worship has also to be daily offered according to established forms. All these matters are entirely controlled by woman's will. Even the modernised Hindu paterfamilias has to countenance them and often also to take his part in them, like a willing tool in the manipulating hand of the strong and skilled workman. Lastly, it is still true that the patronage which Indian medical science and Indian arts and manufactures of diverse sorts are still receiving in our homes, is due to the unwavering conservatism of our women in matters relating to their own personal convenience.

More knowledge, more freedom,—is the cry of the social reformer. Yes by all means. But the knowledge and freedom you give to our women must be such as are suited to our social aims and domestic ideals. That which is suited to the women of the West is not necessarily suited to those of the East. That social development in the West has taken a course far different from ours in response to peculiar requirements and environments is a fact admitted on all hands. So the education and usages which lead to social progress in Europe may lead—we shall not be wrong in holding that they *must* lead—to moral degradation and social dislocation here, if not also to serious disasters like

those which happened to Roman Society by the invasions of the Teutonic barbarians, or to the ancient Persian nation by the Macedonian conquest It is in a world in which all true progress is conditioned by the necessary limitations of time place race, and historical antecedents. To be rid of our past will be as easy as to achieve the impossible; to attempt to reverse it will prove as foolish as the attempt to restore it; to ignore it altogether and to begin our course anew as if we have a perfectly clean slate before us, will be to lose safety and to court further disaster We can only have a slow course of conservative reform. But our social *reformers* so-called, have ruined the cause of true reform by attempting to closely imitate the social customs and ideals of Western nations. To convert and degrade our women into graduates and platform-speakers to introduce *European* ideas of comfort and happiness into our homes, insist on having here that moral equality and familiarity of the sexes which exercises such a curiously predominant influence in determining the character and destinies of European societies—these and similar changes which the reform party in India are sworn to bring in will simply destroy the essential and fundamental basis of Hindu society and rid it of every element of human character in which we are superior to the people of the West. The excellence of Hindu society lies in the beautiful strength of its passivity, and surely it can be trusted to preserve itself against the insidious attempt of European civilisation to destroy the sources of the vitality of our ancient race.

SANSKRIT LEARNING IN INDIA *

(BY MAHAMAHOPADHYAYA HARI PRASAD SASTRI M A)

ON December of last year the Prize Day of the Sanskrit College Calcutta, was held, the Hon'ble Mr. T. Raleigh, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta presiding. The following is the main portion of the speech of the Principal :—

Sanskrit has a vast literature. The works in Sanskrit greatly outnumber those in Greek and Latin put together. In a catalogue of Sanskrit MSS published in 1891 the number of single works amounts to 32,000 and several thousands have been brought to notice since then With the progress of civilization not only the various Provinces of the Indian Empire but also the countries of Tibet, China Japan, Central Asia Mongolia, and even the backward Indo-Chinese Peninsula add to our knowledge of Sanskrit and Sanskritic Works

This literature requires careful study, because in it are written the scriptures of three great religious systems of the world, namely, Hinduism, Northern Buddhism, and Digambara Jainism not to say anything of the scriptures of Southern Buddhism and Sevetambara Jainism and of the numerous religious sects of India which are never well understood without a thorough mastery of the Sanskrit language and its literature Of the religious literatures written in Sanskrit proper one

* Address of The Principal of the Sanskrit College, Calcutta at the distribution of prizes held in December 1902, under the presidency of the Hon'ble Mr. Raleigh, Vice Chancellor of the University of Calcutta,

is the most ancient going back, by the lowest calculation, to the fifteenth century before Christ, and the other has the widest currency in Northern Asia If the scriptures of a religion can give importance to a language, the importance of Sanskrit is unquestionable.

But religion is not the only subject on which Sanskrit bases its claim to importance. It has a vast scientific and a vast arts literature, taking the word arts in the widest acceptance of the term, including poetry, drama, fiction, philosophy, history, tradition, including divine, human, domestic and social law and the law of the lawyers

As regards science, the Indians did all they could by observation and observation alone. Experiments were just dawning upon them when their country was overwhelmed by the Muhammadan conquest. In the medical science of the Hindus, in which no trace has yet been discovered of any foreign influence, more than 400 works have been traced by my friend Dr. Cordier now working at Pondichery, and the Indian medical science is now a subject of admiration and study in Europe. What progress they made in Chemistry is now a subject of investigation by an eminent professor of a neighbouring college. In pure Mathematics they are not only the early teachers of the world but they made eminent progress though they have been far outstripped by modern discoveries and researches in Europe. In Astronomy they not only made a beginning but with the help of the Yavanas made a substantial progress and they were making steady advance when the Muhammadan conquest overtook them. They have now been left behind by the discoveries and inventions of the past four centuries in Europe. From

Vrihat Sanhita and other works it appears that they made a beginning in various departments of physical science so far as observation was concerned and made many bold speculations, though they have been greatly surpassed by the Scientists of modern Europe

The stupendous temples of Southern India the living pictures of Bhubaneswar and the beautiful paintings in the caves on the Godavary, show wherein progress they made in architecture sculpture, and painting. They had their books on all these subjects Their great progress in fine arts is attested by the fact that they enumerated these arts as 64 and all these 64 had each its literature I have seen works on dancing, acting, mimicry and so forth Their dramaturgy had a considerable literature.

But the branches of knowledge in which they achieved great eminence are philosophy poetry and science of language. It is generally said that the Hindus have six systems of Philosophy But the six is a misnomer. Madhava in the fourteenth century enumerates sixteen different systems but modern research has discovered many more, each with a distinct aim, with a distinct object, and a distinct method of reasoning; the study of Hindu Philosophy has only just dawned in Europe and it is with pardonable pride that the Indian Brahmanas observe that eminent European thinkers give their philosophy the highest place in transcendental speculations of the world.

Indian poetry fired the imagination even of the greatest poet of Europe in the 19th century who, however, had seen only a very faint translation of one or two works of Sanskrit Poetry.

In linguistic speculations India always had a high

place and as soon as these speculations reached Europe it gave rise to what is called the science of language, one of the greatest achievements of Europe in the 19th century, the eminent initiators of which acknowledge their unequivocal obligation to Sanskrit.

History is the only branch of knowledge in which the Indians are said to have been deficient and the blame is considered to be well deserved. But history began to be written so far back as 610 A. D. and recent researches have brought to light many works of local and contemporary history.

Indian law books began to be written immediately after the Vedas; the oldest extant is said to have been written 1000 years before Christ. They were at first in the aphoristic form. Then they were written in verse in which form most of the original law books are found. Then there were commentaries and at last came codification. It is impossible to say how many different codes were made out of the old materials. The law began to be codified as early as the ninth century and almost in every country there was a code. Some countries again changed their codes more than once; so the law codes themselves form a vast body of of literature.

I am perhaps taxing the patience of my audience by too lengthy an enumeration of the Sciences and Arts in Sanskrit and I must now bring it to an end

English education in India by introducing the advanced methods of scientific study, by initiating historical investigations and by fostering wider acquaintance of various countries, their peoples, their sciences and their thoughts, has done a service to India the value of which cannot be overestimated. India will remain

ever indebted to those eminent men who initiated the bold idea of educating the children of India in English But in doing so they thought they were working on a *carte blanche* and took no notice of what India already possessed and so while English education received Government patronage Sanskrit was left to the Pandits single-handed. That they have succeeded in preserving it so long is a credit to them.

But they are labouring under a great disadvantage There are two classes of learned men now in India The Pandits and the University men, but they are mutually exclusive of each other. The Pandits would see nothing in University men but the destroyers of their old religious, social, and domestic codes and the University men would see nothing but unflinching upholders of old social and domestic abuses in the Pandits Mutual sympathy is absolutely wanting A Pandit may sometimes be an admirer of an University man or the system under which he is trained or an University man may be an admirer of a Pandit or of the system under which he is educated, but without mutual study such admiration is a blind admiration and is often apt to work mischief

There is only one institution in all India where such a mutual study is possible and that is the Calcutta Sanskrit College. It was started at a time when the policy was to educate Indian people in Indian classics with English as a subsidiary study, and it has fortunately survived all many educational revolutions in the Empire and is now entering the 79th year of its existence. Here Young Hindu lads begin their Sanskrit and their English at the lowest of their school classes and pass through all the University examinations up

to the B A and pass through an examination system of the College and then appear at the M. A Examination in Sanskrit, and become an M A in Sanskrit The College examinations are by no means easy tests and they embrace all English subjects plus several papers in Sanskrit. There are three such tests; one in the second class of the School Department one in the first year class of the College Department; and the last in the third year class It no doubt is a strain on the students and it is a matter of congratulation that we get students at all. Some wonder that the Sanskrit College is not a large institution with several hundred students But the difficulties and the strain retard many from joining it.

There are two classes of men who would gladly join it and study with eminent success, but they are unfortunately too poor and cannot bear the cost of living in a costly city like Calcutta; namely the children of the Pandits and Vaidyas, and these are for many centuries accustomed to a subsidised education and to them to incur cost for education is a strange novelty This College is likely to produce eminent results if there is a free hostel in which at least 50 students can be boarded and lodged

The institution has a College and a School Department and it is affiliated to the Calcutta University which makes no concession to the hard-working students of this institution by relaxing in their favour the hard and fast rule of having many compulsory subjects. It has an Oriental Department in which students qualify themselves for the Government Sanskrit Examinations; the Adya and Madhya and the Upadhi There is no special allotment of Professors for this

department; the Professors of the College lecture here too. There are 21 groups of subjects in which a Sanskrit student may get this Upadhi or title and we have arrangements for teaching 7 of these groups and our present Director of Public Instruction, M. A. Pedler, F.R.S.(C.I.E., is doing his best to arrange for the teaching of a few groups more to make the Oriental Department a model Tol in this Province. We have arrangements for drill and for drawing; and the formation of a gymnasium has been proposed. We are now teaching two groups of M. A. subjects with a great strain on the professional staff who have often to work 4 and 5 hours a day more than this we are at present not in a position to do. A considerable portion of my time is taken up with the research scholars two in number, one of whom is studying paleography and the other investigating the Vaishnava Literature.

The Principal of the Sanskrit College is also the Registrar of the Sanskrit Examinations which are conducted by the Sanskrit Professors of this College with the help of experts from *tols* under his direct supervision and under the control of the Director of Public Instruction. The popularity of these examinations is evinced by the fact that undergraduates and graduates of the Calcutta University and Acharyas and Sastris of Benares and Lahore, and even the Mahavidyate of distant Mysore have begun to appear at these examinations. Last year 162 students appeared at the Upadhi Examination of whom 62 passed 1021 appeared at the Madhya Examination of whom 362 passed and 2613 appeared at the Adya Examination of whom 655 passed. In these examinations one student takes up one subject only and the taking of many subjects is unknown.

THE MISSION OF THE PANDIT.*

(By Prof. M. RANGACHARIAR, M.A.)

RESPONSIBILITY OF PANDITS

IN congratulating you the students of the Sanskrit College, I am particularly anxious to impress upon your minds the serious nature of the responsibility which is sure to devolve upon you in your life as forming in your own time a part of the body of the Sanskrit-educated orthodox men in the Hindu community. To succeed well in the study of Sanskrit literature and philosophy, to become well acquainted with the various phases of Hindu religious thought, and to be honoured in the assembly of pandits and the courts of kings are all certainly aims which are worth of your ambition. But there is a higher aim than all these which none of you ought to ignore.

It is a fairly well recognised fact that what constitutes the essential excellence of Hindu civilisation is very largely associated with the development of Hindu religion. The one treasure of which Hindu civilization may well be proud is what we are all accustomed to call by the name of our *Sanatana-Dharma*. Different countries are generally seen to be famous for different kinds of achievements in history: some are famous for political achievements, some for military, some for commercial and some for industrial achievements and so on. India's famous achievement is in the wonderful social

* Translation of a speech delivered in Tamil at the annual distribution of prizes to the students of the Sanskrit College, Sreeperumbudur, near Madras.

organisation of her racially varied population and in the evolving of a universal and cosmopolitan system of religion which is highly tolerant and inclusive. Indeed, in so far as sharing the inheritance of wealth is concerned, the world is full of men who are anxiously willing to undertake that responsibility, or as we say in Sanskrit *artha dayadas* are only too many. But when it comes to share the inheritance of duty, the men who are willing to undertake such a responsibility are few and far between; in other words, *dharma dayadas* as we speak of them in Sanskrit are always too few. Students who are trained to appreciate the wealth of wisdom that is found in Sanskrit literature, and who, by such training, come to occupy a religiously honoured position in Hindu society are indeed the *dharma dayadas* of the ancient *Rishis* and *Acharyas* of India through whom has flowed out for all time the stream of India's philosophic and religious life. To safeguard this inherited wealth of wisdom, to increase its usefulness and value, and to hand it on to future generation in a condition of progressive improvement may, therefore be seen to constitute the function in life of such of you as wish to become honoured pandits and teachers of religion in the working out of your own lives.

The responsibility of inheriting the wealth of wisdom, handed down to the ancient Vedic seers and sages, as well as by the many later saintly teachers and philosophers, must have always been enormously great But there are certain peculiar circumstances in the history of our country now which make the burden of that responsibility much greater than it could ever have been We all know that times have changed,

and know also that it is taught in the *Mahabharata* that the king who rules over us is invariably the cause of the change in the times *Raja kalasya karanam*. Ever since the Mahomedans came to India and exercised political authority therein the old regulations found in the sacred laws of the Hindus in respect of the duties of sovereignty have not been in actual operation, as they were in the days when Hindu *Kshatriya* kings ruled over the land. Our present Emperor is himself a Christian in religion, and British rule is not therefore based on the *Smriti* law of India, in so far as the organisation of politics is concerned. I do not mention this to be in any way a defect of modern British politics. On the other hand, if you think for yourselves you will be able to find out soon that the non-theocratic and scientifically temporal character of the organisation of British politics in India is in our present situation one of its chiefest recommendations My object in mentioning this to you is to enable you to see how, owing to the dissociation of politics from religion and social regulations, the duty of maintaining well the religion and the social order of the people has devolved upon the people themselves They have now to do it without obtaining any direct help from the state and its power to exercise authority effectively.

That in this situation the moral responsibility of the pandit to the Hindu community is of a seriously weighty character may at once be made out with a little calm reflection. There is another change in the situation that has come upon us in a perfectly legitimate manner. I refer to the struggle which Mahomedanism and Christianity are now carrying on against

the ancient *Sanatan-Dharma* of this land. That even before the days of the advent of the Mussalmans in India there were religious struggles in the country is an undoubted fact of history. The oldest struggle of Hinduism against Buddhism and against Jainism was in character different from the modern struggle of Hinduism with Islam and Christianity This difference lies chiefly in the fact that, while Buddhism and Jainism took no note of any revealed religious Scripture, both Christianity and Islam are founded like Hinduism upon Scriptures which are considered to be divinely revealed; and these new religions further claim that their Scriptures possess a higher ethical and religious value than the Vedas and other Scriptural works of the Hindus Nay more their missionaries are actively engaged in propagandistic work, those of Christianity even more than those of Islam Owing to the supineness of the privileged pandits and priests who are responsible for the proper exercise of the social and religious authority of the Hindu people, the propagandistic work of the missionaries of these aggressive religions is seen to produce an appreciable number of conversions, particularly among the lower classes of the Hindu community. An intelligent writer has recently observed in one of our English [illegible] in connection with this situation of affairs that it looks [illegible] though the foot of the elephant were in the mouth of the crocodile. Things may not be quite [illegible] serious as yet, nevertheless it is time enough that the leaders of religious thought among [illegible] bestirred themselves so as to be able fairly to meet the forces of our new situation In matters connected with our religious and social affairs,

it is the voice of the pandit and priest that is endowed with the sanctioning power of authority They are as it were the custodians of the popular conscience Such of us as have received English education have by the very fact of our being the recipients of such an education become disqualified to bear the burden of this kind of social and religious responsibility Some of us may know some Sanskrit and may even have the authority of Scriptures as well as of reason on our side, still our opinions are incapable of telling against the opinion of a purely Sanskrit-knowing clergyman in the community I sometimes think how wonderful it is that we are easily relieved of such a serious burden and the relief that we so receive necessarily makes the burden on the shoulders of the pandit heavier than it would otherwise be. Here again there is another reason why those who study the religious and secular literature in Sanskrit with the object of equipping themselves to become pandits and the honoured upholders of the *Sanatana-Dharma* of the Hindu people, have to realise well that they live in a period in the history of India when there is before them the largest possibility of either proving serviceable to their country and its civilisation or of miserably failing in conducting their lives in the manner that is naturally expected of them. Your privileges are high in the social order of the Hindu community, and I therefore exhort you to remember that the exalted character of your privileges makes your responsibilities really onerous. You can no longer, like your ancestors in the line of Hindu religious learning, ignore the world outside of India, inasmuch as that the world has itself come to live in our country and to tell

more or less effectively on our popular life and our civilisation. Therefore side by side with acquiring the knowledge of all that is worthy in Sanskrit literature and philosophy, see that you also become acquainted with the past and present conditions of other peoples and civilisations in the various parts of the world. Such ■ comprehensive knowledge of human history and of the conditions of the outside world will enable you to understand your own religion and philosophy better than you can otherwise do. It will enable you to know yourself as others know you; and by comparing yourself and the civilisation of your country with other peoples and their civilisations you will be in a position to understand what is lacking in the organisation of Hindu life and wherein that organisation is weak and defective. That none of you can discharge well the duties of your position in life as the custodians of Hindu popular conscience, without equipping yourself well with this kind of modern knowledge, appears to my mind to be self-evident. I do not want you to do anything which will take away from you the authority of your clerical position in Hindu society, but what I want you to do is that you should ■ equip yourself as to be able in the modern conditions of Hindu life to exercise that authority in a perfectly upright manner, so ■ to help on your own moral and spiritual progress ■ well ■ the advancement of the welfare and happiness of the innumerable people, to minister to whom as ■ religious teacher and guide ■ indeed the proudest of your privileges.

UNITY AMONG THE COMMUNITIES.

There is one point more on which I wish to dwell ■ little before I conclude my remarks. Our modern

British Government which has rightly allowed perfect freedom to all religions in this land, so that each may work out its best in the cause of human progress has, curiously enough served at the same time to strengthen the sense of unity among all the communities in the land This sense of a large popular unity is not altogether new to India The old *Varnasrama Dharma* as interpreted by Vyasa in the *Mahabharata* laid down, as it were the foundation of this unity Vyasa recognises caste by birth as well as caste by quality; and he has declared that in every caste as determined by birth we may find all castes as determined by quality In this way in the genetic Brahminical caste, there exist all the four castes qualitatively, as much as in the genetic Sudra caste there may exist similarly all the four qualitative castes We thus arrive at a Brahminical Sudra as easily and as rationally as we arrive at a Sudraic Brahmin; and when the *Vedanta* declares that all men are fit to obtain the salvation or *Moksha*, it relies very little indeed on the consideration of caste by birth Thus it was preached thousands of years ago in India that from the standpoint of religion and *Moksha* all men of all ranks and racial origin are equal. This idea of religious unity has been extended even further than this In India it has been made to cover the whole of humanity irrespective of all differences in race and creed. All men in all ways follow my path; in whatever form one wishes to worship Me, in that same form do I give one his firm faith"—are teachings given by Sri Krishna in the *Bhagwadgita* Therefore we on our part need have no quarrel of any kind either with the Mussalman or with the Christian: and while we may thus fraternally sympathise with and be helpful

to all honest and earnest religious endeav ur in the land, we nee l not feel that the barriers of caste among us necessarily make for unl alt y separation. In the *Bhagavadgita* th s caste barrier seems t› be intended merely to prevent *Varna-Sankara* hat is t› prevent intermarriage between r cial y unsuited communities. 'I here is no other kind of diffe ence which is so far as I know therein taught to ›e obligatorily upheld I therefore maintain that the conditions of nodern British rule have only tended to strengthen this feeling of amity and this bond of unity among us; and under these new cricumstances, he would be a *great sinner indeed who does anything to thwart* the development of this growi ng ▬▬ of friendliness and unity among the peop e of the land. 'The *ordinary pandit's tendency is* I am sorry to say, more to rely upon the elements of difference than upon elements of the un ty. This I hold to be a serious *mistake, not merely* because *it contradicts the spirit* of the age but largely because it tends to weaken the powei of our ancient heritage of *Sanatana Dharma* so as to *make it appear disorganised and unacceptably* repulsive, This danger of weakness we can guard against, only if we make our sympath ies and sense *of unity grow stronger day by day.*

Let us remember that we are all followers of the same religion derived from the same source of *divine revelation,* and let us in remembering this sink all our minor differences in all our mutual relations. Otherwise, the fabric of Hindu civilisation cannot endure in safety in the midst of the new conditions into which we and our posterity are tending. That the strengthening of this sense of unity is possible

is now strongly borne in upon my mind by what the Vaisya supporters and managers of this College are doing in the way of resuscitating Hindu religious culture and Sanskrit secular learning. Of old it was arranged in India that the power of wisdom, the power of heroism and the power of wealth should not all become concentrated in any one individual or community in society. The justification of this arrangement lies in the fact that such a concentration would prevent these three different kinds of powers from acting as checks upon each other, and would thus lead to various inscrutable and none the less unbearable forms of social tyranny. Where the power of wisdom and the power of heroism are at the disposal of the power of wealth (as some say it now is in Europe), the commercial spirit sure to colour deeply both morality and politics Some would even go further and say that even religion under such circumstances becomes quite commercial in spirit. An organisation of religion and society which is calculated to avoid the risk arising from the concentration of these three kinds of power just mentioned is not at all to be lightly thought of particularly when it is also remembered that each of these three powers is so ordered as to serve effectively the good of all in the society which is so organised. The wisdom of the Brahman the heroism of the Kshatriya the wealth and commercial enterprise of the Vaisya, and the industry and labour of the Sudra are all intended to serve the good of society as a whole; and if it is borne in mind that in modern days the Brahman, the Kshatriya the Vaisya and the Sudra are all determined, except in far marriage is concerned, by consider-

ations of physical and moral qualifications more than by mere birth, even the most modern student of sociological science will find nothing objectionable or injurious in such an arrangement

I am exceedingly glad that I have been enabled to see to-day so largely manifested before us all the helpfulness of the power of wealth to sustain and increase the power of wisdom; and my prayer is that our friend Mr Namberumal Chettiyar whom I consider to be the *Dharma Dayada* of the late Raghavachariyar, the earnest and self-sacrificing founder of this College should long continue to cherish the work of this institution and to manage its affairs with efficiency having a high standard of usefulness before his mind. Unless such institutions come into existence in larger numbers in various parts of the country, and unless they are managed so as to equip pandits with modern knowledge as well as with their ancient learning so as to make them suitable teachers of religion and morality in accordance with the needs of modern times, the future of Hindu civilisation cannot have anything like a bright prospect before it And may the spirit of the great Ramanuja and the meaning of his work — a famous religious and social reformer in India inspire you and all of us here with courage to follow in his footsteps, and fill us with the hope that we too, by following his noble example, may make ourselves in some small way worthy of living well the life with which we have been blessed by God.

THE IDEAL IN EDUCATION *

(BY PROFESSOR M. RANGACHARIAR, M. A.)

THE orator said that the word "education" meant literally the drawing out of the inner potentialities of the person subjected to the process It also meant however, that there is a certain amount of instilling of power and perspicacity into the mind of the man educated. From his experience as a teacher it appeared to him that teachers often instilled more into the pupil than they educed out of him Looking at the question in both these aspects, they found that education did not only mean the training of an individual in such a manner as made him effectively manifest all the powers he had within himself, but it also meant the fitting up of that person in relation to his environments in such a manner as to make him, as it were, heir to the accumulated experience of the human race. The history of such an education really began with that of literature, as indeed literature had all the aspirations and ideals of various civilisations and societies embodied in it. Before the origin of literature there was certainly in operation the education that nature was herself capable of imparting. But in this education the wisdom as well as the experience of one did not go far to help another. Those that came after had to begin the process of acquiring wisdom and experience almost where those who went before had had to begin. No generation of men and women could convey much moral benefit to another which succeeded

* An address delivered at the Mylapore Club in 1903.

it The advent of literature into the field of human civilisation changed at once this state of affairs One of the most important ends that education now served has to enable a man to acquire for himself the accumulated experience of mankind with all its aspirations and aims and the results of all its previous observation and inference. If that was one among the chief aims of all education, it must be easy for them to see that the scope of education has been expanding with the progress of civilisation; in other words, the quantity of the experience of the human race had become certainly much more now than it had ever been before. The scope of education had become widened to so great an extent in modern times that the whole problem of education might be said to have become quite cosmopolitan and international. The modern education which they were receiving in this country was for instance much wider in scope, more comprehensive and international in character than the ideal of education known to them from of old. The aim which the problem of education had to keep in view had now come necessarily to comprise the whole of humanity, subject of course to the local limitations imposed on the existing system of education by tradition nationality, politics and such other causes Education to be ideally perfect and to suit the international and cosmopolitan character of literature and science, must now have as its aim the study of the whole of humanity

The question of the ideal in education had in this manner become very wide and comprehensive in these modern days. Englishmen cannot now ignore French and German thought and literature, nor even can Russia ignore effectively British thought and literature.

India, Persia, Japan and China are all being made to contribute to the ideally cosmopolitan culture of the world-embracing civilisation of to day.

This would show how difficult this problem of the ideal in education had become, and how that ideal, although it had varied with time, place, and circumstances, had had a tendency to become more and more comprehensive in its contents as well as in its aims Nevertheless, in solving this problem now we had the great advantage of the guidance that might be derived from an examination of the various ideals propounded by various philosophic minds at various times in the history of the world. The ideal of education had indeed been propounded by ancient, mediæval and modern philosophers and when the various ideals propounded by various thinkers at various periods and places were examined in detail, they were found to be not at all in full agreement with one another Some ideals were political, others religious and others, like the modern ones, were secular and scientific They must try to find out what common feature there was underlying these several apparently conflicting ideals. What struck him as a common feature of all these ideals was this, namely, that in all these ideals they found an endeavour to make the best of the capacity of the individual, while he was also kept in harmonious relation to his historic environment. Thus they would find on examination that all these ideals were largely the reflection of the historical conditions of the age in which they had been propounded; thus the conditions of the hour and the place had largely determined the aim of the educational ideal In all these ideals, the endeavour to make the best of the capacity of the individual

while training him to be in complete harmony with his historic environment was the one distinctly noticeable end kept in view One would therefore be justified in saying that that system of education was the most ideally perfect which tried to secure such an end. The ideal in education must, however, vary from time, for the reason that the environment into which an individual was born varied from time to time The environment of the days of Vasishta and Viswamitra was not the same as that of the India of to-day. India under Akbar, which was not so very long ago, was in many respects different from India under Victoria The education which might be ideally suited to the India of the latter age could not naturally be so good in relation to the India of the earlier age and vice versa Thus in dealing with the problem of education they would have to look at it from two distinct standpoints, *viz*, (1) the development of the individual and (2) the harmonising of the developed individual to his surroundings. Of course, in the practical operation of education these two items could not be kept separate In working out either of these objects in any plan of education, the other is also naturally attended to

His object in taking up the subject for consideration was to ascertain where the present condition of Indian education was defective, and whether they could not in the spirit of honest patriots put forth their best endeavours to remedy the defects that may be found therein. If education as current in this country was carefully examined, they would find that there were two unrelated systems in existence, one the indigenous system and the other the modern British system. Very little in the way of a systematic survey

of the former had been done though in regard to the latter a great deal of trustworthy information was available The primary education imparted under the indigenous system in *pial* schools had been most beautifully adjusted to the popular requirements of the country till the advent of the new civilisation of Europe into India, so much so that it sometimes seemed to him a pity that even the modern primary education did not adopt much that was good in the *pial* school system. As regards the indigenous higher education namely, the Pandit's education, one thing was certain that is, that so far as the current of popular life and thought was concerned the indigenous education was distinctly more in harmony with it than the introduced Western education This modern British system was wholly foreign in origin Its ideals and aims were also foreign to the traditions and social and religious conditions of this land The tendency of our modern education was to instil into the minds of those receiving it a large amount of what is known as the individualistic and democratic spirit—the feeling that the individual was in all matters all in all In connection with all questions concerning social progress and civilisation this was a feeling that would somehow assert itself under the guidance of this new education. This spirit was due to the history of Europe during recent centuries, when the democratic spirit pervaded their political as well as social and religious organisations The democratic spirit of European civilisation was of course largely accounted for by the peculiar historic conditions of Europe. The collectivism of Indian social life was so very different in nature from the individualism of European life that the [redacted] and ideals of European civilisa-

tion could not always and altogether be conducive to healthy progress in India. Where they had conflict of racial interests democratic spirit could not naturally and easily come into existence and operation. Sir George Campbell, after a tour in the Southern States of the United States of America and studying the "colour problem" there, observed that the organisation of an institution like the caste of India was the only thing by means of which it was possible to introduce harmony there instead of the current conflict of races and enable them to carry the democratic spirit into as full practice as the circumstances allowed. The absence of the growth of democratic spirit in India was due to her peculiar historical conditions of the past; and this democratic spirit introduced from civilisations differently situated and worked on different lines into this country could not harmoniously work with the past traditions and tendencies of the people of this country. In the midst of the continued racial complexity and religious variety of the historic life of India, the equality of man to man could be practically worked out among the people only in the field of religion to some extent by adopting the principle of universalism and all-inclusive toleration! Indeed, history distinctly showed that religious democracy was more easily practicable than political democracy, while this in its turn was more easily practicable than social democracy. The introduction of Christianity and the absence of the colour problem were together responsible for the dominant democratic spirit of Europe. It was becoming evident every day that that spirit very often led them to feel that things in India were really on a wrong basis, and that the old civilisation of India had

altogether gone on a wrong track that it had not had a proper ideal in view, and that the Indian caste distinctions were all wrong, and so on In such trying situations of thought and opinion he would ask them to consider calmly how European civilisation would have got on and worked itself out if it had been in its historic conditions similar to the environment in which in this country their early as well as nearer ancestors had had to live

If they studied the history of the world during the last four or five centuries they would learn that wherever the white races had come into contact with other coloured races, the latter suffered very seriously in the struggle for existence and were reduced almost to extinction in most cases In India, however, from time out of memory, different races and different tribes in various stages of development with varying powers and capacities had been living peacefully as well as helpfully side by side If they bore this one fact in mind, they would at once see how it was impossible to work out a democratic civilisation in India and that the only possible civilisation in India could successfully evolve was the civilisation based on caste and complete religious toleration If that was understood, they would see that in India history had built for them an environment which certainly was not in any way unjust or cruel or unwholesome but which, on the other hand, seemed to have been the best possible under the circumstances. Judged from the stand-point of history, they were neither better nor worse than they deserved to be It was not thereby intended to attach any moral blame to the collectivist sense of human solidarity which characterised Indian civilisation and all its

humane achievements. What was meant was to show that democratic individualism could not grow as fruit on the tree of Indian civilisation. The character of Indian civilisation had been moreover more dominantly religious than political while European civilisation had been more dominantly political than religious. Religious equality among men had been recognised in India about 3,000 years ago in the days of the *Mahabharata War*. Sri Krishna while granting the religious equality of all men had also pointed out the dangers arising from *Varna-Sankara* or the commingling of incompatible races and castes. Three thousand years after the days of Krishna, Dr. Bryce in his Romanes lecture gave expression to the same opinion that the incompatible mingling of races was, on the whole, calculated to cause the decay of civilisation and the weakening of the power of progress possessed by mankind at large. Difference in colour between the different inhabitants of the same country often made it impossible even for political democracy to come into existence, social democracy being under the circumstance of course out of the question. In addition to the existence of various coloured races, there had until the advent of the British, never been one common Government in India wielding effective sway over the whole country and there had been also no continuity of political history at all, both of which are necessary for political democracy.

If it be thus realised how the growth of the democratic spirit in social and political matters had been impossible in India, they would at once realise the conflict between the new education and the old historically continuous life of the people. The old education of the country, however, was sympathetic

arranged to the historic conditions of its inhabitants, while the new education was arranged sympathetically to the conditions of Europe. They found that the English-educated man now in this country, while he had his inner potentialities developed well enough, was not harmoniously adjusted to the environment into which he was born. In so far as obtaining now the inspiring power of higher education was concerned, we had either to become Pandits without our culture and discipline being brought into line with modern needs and conditions of Hindu society and civilisation, or we had to become English-knowing Bachelors of Arts with an exotic culture discordantly attuned to the traditionally derived organisation of Hindu society and the institutions of its civilisation. While the new education brings the outside world distinctly into the field of our vision and enables us to understand the merit as well as the strength of the dominant civilisation of Europe and America, it makes us even more than blind to understand ourselves and whatever merit or excellence there is in our historic civilisation. It was here that our modern system was undoubtedly defective. From this it did not follow that the Pandit's education was better suited to the existing conditions of the country. The latter was defective in that it did not adjust itself to the new conditions of the country, while the modern European education implanted in our midst was defective, inasmuch as it did not sufficiently adapt itself to the historic environments of the country. In this way the indigenous education had ceased to possess an ideal character about it, while the new English education had not as yet risen to occupy the position of a harmoniously organis-

ed ideal in relation to the calm and continued progress of India and her historic civilisation They should therefore correct this situation and this should be done more in the direction of modernising the Pandit and his system of education than in banning the modern B. A to become more or less antiquated. This naturally follows from what had been already mentioned in relation to what constituted the common characteristic of all the ideals of education known to history. The moral value of India's old ideal of higher humanitarian education was still great enough to make it worthy. But it did not bring the educated man into any kind of vital relation with the actual realities of the present day and hour, and thus acted as a clog on the wheel of progress. The new education and its influences had as yet barely touched the surface of the complicated and multitudinous population of India, and would naturally take much time to get itself modified so as to meet all the requirements of the progressive life and thought of India caught [redacted] she was in the vortex of world-politics and cosmopolitan civilisation. The easier way of bridging the historic gap between the East and West in India was, it appeared to him, by endeavouring to pull up the old education to the level of the new requirements. If the indigenous system thus took account of the peculiar changes in the historical condition of this country and then began to operate upon their social, moral and religious environments and upon their civilisation, then progress in India would be much easier and be in every way worthy of admiration.

RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA. *

(By Mr. G Venkataranga Row, M A.)

It has been remarked that the great movement of thought which characterised the 19th century is a movement through negation to re-affirmation through destruction to re-construction, in Carlyle's language, through the 'everlasting no' to the "ever-lasting yes.' The researches of science and the growth of the spirit of rationalism and of critical investigation in the beginning of this century shook men's faith in the spiritual powers and destiny of man and impelled them to revolt against the traditions of the past and the institutions on which the whole moral and social life of the community had till then been based. An era of spiritual peace and of social fellowship and co-operation gave place to an era of unrest and of savage individualism and competition Religion with its healing message of faith and hope and charity became discredited and in its place were substituted a vague and shadowy sentimentalism and a lifeless humanism and material secularism. Man is essentially a religious being and has always found in religion not only the principle which places him in right relations with himself and his fellow-beings but also the source and spring of all those ideals and aspirations which give dignity to his manhood and elevate him above the beasts of the field. He could not therefore long rest

* An address delivered on the occasion of the Birth Day celebration

in an attitude of negation and denial He tried the watch-words and ideals of materialism and individualism in the fire of experience and found them utterly hollow and spurious. With a passionate longing for the living unity that binds all the aspects of the many-sided reality that surrounds his life, he has begun to re-assert and re-affirm the ideals and faiths of the past and to draw his strength and hope once again from those ancient time-honoured and well-tried sources. In this critical stage he is looking around for inspiration and guidance Will he get them and are there 'mighty prophets, seers blessed' as of old ready to rescue him from this slough of despondency and help him to vindicate his native dignity and divinity against the still alluring spirit of the age, which finds its characteristic expression in Nietzsche whispering into His ears the deceptive message—"A new table, oh my brethren I put over you. Become hard No more weak palaying about those empty formulas of a religion of which we have given up the substance. We are in possession, we are the superiors we are the strongest The best *things belong to me and mine the best food*, the purest sky, the strongest thoughts, the fairest women" In spite of this tendency to justify philosophically the assertion of the animality of man, the bitter cry of the human soul for inspiration and guidance is rising up from the East and West to the throne of Love and Mercy. Will not the supreme Lord who has so often sent down in the critical periods of human history his messengers to heal the wounds of humanity and to help on its march towards its divine goal, bless his children in these modern days of trial and tribulation

with hope and illumination? He will and those who have faith in the divine ordering of the Universe have no reason to doubt it The 19th century has witnessed the manifestations of divine power and wisdom in some of its choicest spirits, who have raised their voices against the rampant individualism and materialism of the age

Many noble souls who descended in the 19th century to this earthly tabernacle to carry out the will of God and spread his message of love and peace of harmony and good-will may be mentioned and not the least of these divinely appointed souls is Sri Ramakrishna Paramhamsa. Though born in an obscure corner of India, he was essentially a prophet of the age and his message holds good for all lands He has understood the canker that is eating into the heart of our modern society and lived a life which was at once a protest against the superficialities and egotisms of modern civilisation and a model of what a life of renunciation and divine realisation ought to be. He saw with his clear vision that the only remedy for the disintegration and deterioration of modern life is the restoration in its purity and simplicity of the ancient Vedantic ideal of the unity of self, and of self-renunciation and self-realisation. The supremacy of the individual, conceived merely as a finite individual, an atom set among other atoms in a finite world, is at the root of the strife and suffering we see in the world around us. When the individual with his deep-rooted sense of separateness asserts himself in his lonely majesty and makes his claim to exclusive satisfaction and glorification, he is immediately confronted by another with the same self-assertion and with

the same demand and there ensues an unending conflict. Each makes an exclusive claim to a central position in the universe and this involves the necessity of a combat. The notion of personal right inflates the individual, fills him with thoughts of self and of what others owe him, while it ignores the other side of the question and extinguishes his capacity for devoting himself to the ethical service and spiritual unification of humanity. It leads him to subordinate everything to himself and to think the world, the society and the state as made for him and for him alone. This theory of individual atomism which is so common to the natural and unregenerate man, who is a mere subject of sensations, appetites and passions, is responsible for much of the tragedy of life and so long as it is allowed to remain unchallenged, no attempts to organise society on an enduring basis and evolve a harmonious and ever-expanding social order will be of any success. The Vedanta for the first time in the history of the world questioned the basic principle of individualism and exposed its utter hollowness and absurdity.

It denied the independence of the individual and proclaimed that he is essentially and organically connected with the infinite life of the universe and that the sense of separateness that makes individuals believe as different from one another is a mere illusion of the phenomenal and conditioned existence. The Vedanta conceived the world with its divisions and antagonisms as a manifestation or revelation of the supreme and self-conscious spirit, which is one without a second and absolute. When the individual abandons the unreality of his independence and submits himself to the

principle which ▬ his true self, and also the self of the universe, he finds himself no longer as one amidst a multitude of warring atoms, but as a member of an infinite organic whole, in which the division of self-conscious individuals disappears like the separateness of notes in a harmony. This feeling of solidarity and brotherhood which pervades all the beings that share the animated life and is realised by self-renunciation constitutes the dominant note of the Vedanta in its practical sphere It is to innovate and re-invigorate this feeling in the Hindu mind and thereby to restore the unity of the Hindu life and civilisation that Ramakrishna Paramahamsa lived and taught He said —' I look upon all human beings in fact all creatures, as the incarnations of the deity. I see God evolved in all things God manifest in everything, in man and nature I see God himself has taken these multifarious forms that appear before our eyes in this universe." This doctrine of the unity and divinity of man he not only preached but also realised in every act of his life. One day his wife, feeling distressed at his continued absence left, the home of her own people and went to meet her lord in the shrine in which he worshipped at Calcutta He received her very kindly but told her that the old Ramakrishna was dead, and that the new one could never look upon any woman as his wife. He said that he saw his mother the Goddess Kali, in her, and however much he might try, he could never see anything else. He addressed her ▬ his mother, worshipped her with flowers and incense, asked her blessings ▬ a child does from his mother. He then told her— "I would be as I am, I would worship always, I would learn more deeply of divine things.

Yet if you will, I am yours Then I must be as other men, of and for this lower life" The wife, who was worthy of such a hero, told him that she wanted nothing from him as a husband, that she would be no hindrance to his worship that her desire for her husband should never stand between him and his God and only requested him to allow her to serve him for ever and to learn from him how to realise God. This incident in his life which is very well authenticated shows not only his realisation of the divine unity of man but also how the general Hindu mind is made to be accordant with such a high philosophic ideal. Ramakrishna used often to go to the houses of Pariah servants and sweepers and sweep their houses with his own hands, crying aloud 'moti si!" destroy in me all idea that I am great, and that I am a Brahmin, and that they are low and Pariahs, for who are they but thou in so many forms' Here again we have the same note of the unity and divinity of man

May I hope that a spark of the divine fire that animated the blessed and all-inclusive spirit of the Paramahamsa will find a place in our hearts and impel us to acts of self-sacrifice and of social service and fellowship, irrespective of caste, colour or creed. Many of our brethren in the lower strata of society are languishing for want of such sacrifice, service and fellowship. Is it not our duty as admirers of Ramakrishna to do something practical to carry out the spirit of his life and teaching, and thus prove that our admiration is not a hollow make-believe, but a genuine and sincere feeling This is only one of the many ways a which life is capable of affording us guidance and inspiration Some of his immediate disciples have set a noble example in this

direction by opening orphanages, rest-houses, relief houses, dispensaries and patasalas in different parts of northern India, wherein the poor, the weak, the destitute and the forlorn may be fed, clothed and educated and thereby enabled to pay some attention to the claims of the soul A similar philanthropic work is one of the objects of the movement recently started to commemorate the memory of the late Swami Vivekananda who proclaimed throughout the world the divine message of Ramakrishna I trust and hope that adequate support and co operation will be extended by our community to the work already begun by the Sanyasins of the Ramakrishna Mission and proposed to be undertaken by the organisers of the Vivekananda movement In making this earnest appeal to you, I venture to quote the following passage from the autobiography of that high-souled woman, Mrs. Annie Besant, who is doing such noble and monumental service to the regeneration of our country. 'Plenty of people wish well to any good cause but very few care to exert themselves to help it; still fewer will risk anything in its support 'Some one ought to do it, but why should I?' is the ever-re-echoed phrase of weakened amiability 'Some one ought to do it, [redacted] why not I?' is the cry of some earnest servant of man, eagerly forward springing to face some perilous duty Between these two sentences lie whole centuries of moral evolution.'

I pray that the ideal which the life of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa embodies may illuminate our thoughts and stimulate [redacted] to deeds of love and philanthropy. The great unity in proof of which he lived his life of devotion to God and loving service to [redacted] is indeed

hard to be realised in the life of most of us, common men with all our very human limitations; nevertheless the exemplar of an ideal which has been honoured in India from immemorial antiquity, and which even to-day has the power of compelling admiration from all civilisations in all parts of the world, he has enhanced *the already famous reputation of the philosophic life* that has so often blossomed out of Indian civilisation, and has filled our hearts with hope and courage in regard to our future. May his memory be ever green with us and may he long continue to be the pole star to guide unerringly the ship of India's civilisation to that divine destination to which the whole creation moves!

APPENDIX

SOME EMINENT INDIANS ON SOCIAL REFORM

THE LATE JUSTICE RANADE.*

IN the address delivered in 1891 by the late Mr. M. G. Ranade at Nagpur, he pointed out our methods for making a conscious effort to reform. The first method he said, was what he could approximately describe as the method of tradition, that is to say, of basing reform on the old texts The weapon of the school of tradition was interpretation in other words taking the old texts as the basis, and to interpret them so as to suit the new requirements of the time. This was the method followed by Dr Bhandarkar recently. The next method was that of appealing to the conscience of the people The first method, in the opinion of a good many people, leads to disputations, and therefore they advocate the method of appealing directly to their sense of right and wrong, good and bad, sinful and virtuous The weapon of this school of reformers is to seek to bind men by their own pledge or promise. The third method sought to enforce reform by means of penalties,—imposed either by the caste or by the state, in either of which case it is equally a constraint imposed by the

* From some of his inaugural addresses at the National Social Conference

wise upon the ignorant in their common interest. It has its merits as well as demerits, but it must be advocated only in those cases in which the first two have no chance of success, for it is a coercive method, which should not be resorted to, until other ways have been tried. The fourth method is that of dividing from the rest, and forming a new camp, and shifting for themselves. This has its merits too, but many more demerits, the chief among which latter is the breaking of continuity. All lead to the same goal, and excepting the fourth one, all the three have been accepted by the conference.

The process of growth is always slow, where it has to be a sure growth. The best natures naturally want to shorten this long process in their desire to achieve the work of a century in a decade. This temptation has to be resisted, and in this respect the teachings of evolution doctrine have great force, because they teach that growth is structural and organic, and must take slow effect in all parts of the organism, and cannot neglect any, and favour the rest. There are those amongst us who think that, in this connection, the work of the reformer is confined only to a brave resolve to break with the past, and do what our individual reason suggests as proper and fit. The power of long-formed habits and tendencies is however ignored in this view of the matter. "The true reformer has not to write upon a clean slate. His work is more often to complete the half-written sentence. He has to produce the ideal out of the actual, and by the help of the actual." We have one continuous stream of life flowing past us, and

we must *accept* as valid the acts which were noted in the past, and on the principles of the past," and seek to turn the stream with a gentle bend here, and a gentle bend there to fructify the land; we cannot afford to dam it up altogether, or force it into a new channel. It is this circumstance which constitutes the moral interest of the struggle, and the advice so frequently given—that we have only to shake our bonds free and they will fall off themselves,—is one which matured and larger experience seldom supports. We cannot break with the past altogether; with our past we should not break altogether, for it is a rich inheritance, and we have no reason to be ashamed of it The society to which we belong has shown wonderful elasticity in the past, and there is no reason for apprehending that it has ceased to be tractable and patient and persistent in action. While respecting the past, we must ever seek to correct the parasitical growths that have encrusted it, and sucked the life out of it. This is, at least, the spirit in which the societies and associations which are represented at the Social Conference seek to work. They seek no change for its own sake, or because it is fashionable elsewhere. They seek their inspiration in the best traditions of our own past, and adjust the relations of the past with the present in a spirit of mutual forbearance. The Shastras they revere, but they respect the spirit more than the letter of the old law. The road is difficult and beset with dangers, but as it is the only sure road, there is no choice

I profess implicit faith in two articles of my creed. This country of [redacted] the true land of promise. This race of ours is the chosen race. It was not for nothing that God has showered His choicest blessings on this ancient land of Aryavarta. We can see His hand in history. Above all other countries we inherit a civilization and a religious and social polity which has been allowed to work their own free development on the big theatre of time. There has been no revolution, and yet the old condition of things has been tending to reform itself by *the slow process of assimilation. The great religions of* the world took their birth here, and now they meet again as brothers prepared to welcome a higher dispensation, which will unite all, and vivify all. India alone, among all the countries of the world, has been so favoured, and we may derive much strength of inward hope from such a contemplation. Change for the better by slow absorption—*assimilation not by sudden conversion and* revolution—this has been the characteristic feature of our past history. We have outlived Buddhism, and we conquered it by imbibing its excellences and rejecting its errors. We have outlived Mahomedan repression, and have conquered it by being the better for the hardy discipline in the suffering we went *through under its domination. The old world loose*ness of the relations of married life and of affiliation of [redacted] has been purged from [redacted]. The old world slavery of the Sudra millions has been quietly abandoned, the erewhile Sudra classes have been elevated into Vaishyas, our Brahmins have become warriors and statesmen, Kshatriyas have become philosophers and guides, and our Vaishyas have become *our prophets and saints.* The old world fetichism has given place to idolatry. The

old world polytheism has given place to a full recognition by the humblest of our people of the unity of the godhead. Our voracious love of flesh and wine has made room for an ideal of abstinence, charity, and mercy, unknown all over the world. The old sacrifices of man and beast have given place to the holier sacrifices of the passions in us. The patriarchal forms of society have made room for communal organizations all over the country. The sanctity of woman's place—if not as wife, yet as mother, daughter, and sister,—has been realized in a way unknown before or elsewhere.

All these changes have been brought about consciously or unconsciously without any violent struggle, and without breaking up the continuity of the old life. If the guiding hand of God in history has so favoured us hitherto, why should we despair now when we have been brought under influences of a still more elevating kind? The Old Testament testifies to the truth and benignity of the promise of the New Gospel. It is the Gospel which teaches us the supreme duty of unification in place of dissension. It teaches us by example and precept the supreme virtue of organization and self-reliance. It holds before us a brighter ideal of the dignity of the individual soul—the image of the God in us. It seeks to bridge the chasm we otherwise would have been unable to span by our own unaided efforts, and holds us out a hope of a more hopeful future than we have ever enjoyed in the past.

The true test of progress must be seen in signs which show that this vast mass of humanity is being vivified by the sacred fire which burns only to purify

and elevate. There are those who think that no such signs [redacted] be seen, and that our highest duty is to separate ourselves from the decaying mass and look to our own safety I have battled with this idea for the last 30 years and I shall protest against it, till life is spared and my voice permits me to speak. The Hindu community is *not a festering mass of decay and* corruption It [redacted] no doubt conservative to [redacted] degree but that conservatism is its strength No nation has any destined place in history which changes its creed and its morals, its customs and its social polity, with the facility of fashions At the same time our conservatism does not prevent the slow absorption of new ideas and the gradual assimilation of new practices

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What is the inner spring of action which is setting in motion both reform and orthodox workers almost against their will, even where their will does not consent to move? That inner spring, the hidden purpose not consciously realised in many cases, is the sense of human dignity and freedom, which is slowly asserting its supremacy over the national mind It is not confined to one sphere of family life. It invades the whole man, and makes him feel that individual purity and social justice have paramount claims over us all, which we cannot ignore long without being dragged down to [redacted] lower level of existence This or that particular reform or revival of ancient practices [redacted] some would like to call them; the removal of this or that particular defect or vice, is not and should not be the only end and aim of the agitation to improve our social condition. The end is to renovate, to purify, and also to perfect the whole man by liberating his

intellect elevating his standard of duty, and perfecting all his powers. Till renovated, purified and perfected, we can never hope to be what our ancestors once were--the chosen people, to whom great tasks were allotted and by whom great deeds were performed. Where this feeling animates the worker, it is a matter of comparative indifference in what particular direction it asserts itself, and in what particular method it proceeds to work. With a liberated manhood, with buoyant hope, with a faith that never shirks duty, with a sense of justice that deals fairly to all, with unclouded intellect and powers fully cultivated, and, lastly with a love that overleaps all bound, renovated India will take her proper rank among the nations of the world and be the master of the situation and of her own destiny. This is the goal to be reached --this is the promised land. Happy are they who see it in distant vision, happier those who are permitted to work and clear the way on to it, happiest they who live to see it with their eyes and tread upon the holy soil once more. Famine and pestilence, oppression and sorrow, will then be myths of the past, and the Gods will then again descend to the earth and associate with men as they did in times which we now call mythical.

THE HON SIR JUSTICE SUBRAMANIA AIYAR.*

I have noticed with great regret that hastiness, insufficient examination of causes and effects, exaggeration and intolerance characterise some of their writings and utterances. I believe such writings and utterances are retarding rather than advancing the progress of our cause. Allow me to say what I really think of the policy thus pursued. I am anxious to take advantage of this opportunity and state it publicly, because I wish that the outside world should not judge of the soundness and the wisdom of our cause by such utterances and such writings, which I am free to confess are open to objection. I urge most earnestly upon those gentlemen whose enthusiasm and whose honesty I perfectly recognise, not to provoke enmity and not to make enemies to the cause by such a procedure. We must avoid that narrow dogmatism that we so much complain of in our companions. The habits, the feelings and the institutions which are the result of a long history cannot be altered in a day. To some of those ardent reformers I have just referred to, this may sound very harsh. They may ask how are those evils to be eradicated, unless we make it a point of exposing them and holding them for reprobation in season and out of [redacted]. To them my reply is—try and educate public opinion—try and get public opinion on your side, and custom such as you wish will certainly soon grow out of such public opinion, and, [redacted] has been

*From his Presidential address at the last Indian National Social Conference held in Madras.

remarked before, even religion will not delay long to strengthen herself by *establishing* an *alliance* with the accomplished fact, and thus adopting with her sanction and grace the altered practices of domestic and social life. Nor do I think that the religious practices and ceremonies, which seem inconsistent at first sight with our altered programme, to be ridiculous I wish that the reformer gave a thought to the question how these practices, which are inconsistent at first sight with our present position of affairs, came to receive the sanction of religion Once the true foundation of the situation is explained on a rational basis, I feel that much of the opposition which is offered will disappear. In this connection I wish to offer one more observation, and I trust that you will receive it in the spirit in which it is offered. I believe it was the late lamented Professor Ranganadham Mudaliar, for whom all of us have such admiration, who said that, with reference to some matters which the reformer is advocating, no one has a right to demand from another that amount of self-sacrifice, which is consistent with his thoughts and ideas. With reference to these matters I am inclined to grant and endorse his views. Put yourself the question how many of you are willing to become martyrs of the cause at once. That is the difficulty which I ask the enthusiastic reformer to realise fully before he loses patience with those who are desirous of seeing those changes effected I should, however, ask my enthusiastic friend not to misunderstand me.

I trust, gentlemen, that no pains will be spared to win over by sympathetic efforts the majority of our countrymen to our way of thinking. I trust that you

will resolutely avoid the method of rebellion, — Mr. *Justice Ranade aptly termed it. I trust that you will* not even under the most provoking circumstances say it is impossible to get on with this old community, let us form a new community. We shall not then be able to confer any benefit upon the society by such a process You may become a new caste and have a new marriage law enacted in the statute book But so far as the cruel customs that you complain of and so far as relief to the oppressed are concerned, you will not be able to do any good You will be able to say I have saved my daughter my sister and so on, but *you will not* be able to say I have been able to effect a good and salutary change in the general community I trust, *therefore, that you will bear in mind* that this method of rebellion may be avoided even under the most provoking circumstances. Our object should be to try and draw to our view the majority of the community and I think that in going about the work of reform we should also bear in mind the observation of Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar, which he made when addressing an association of young men: 'Your work should not partake of the character of indiscriminate destruction, but of construction on old national lines.' Of course I know that many of you will go back and say that it is usual for Subramania Iyer to indulge in all these platitudes (hear, hear). Many of you may also say that it is easy to suggest good old national lines without being told what these national lines are. If you take ancient books, I trust you will be able to find out that there are a good many national lines. We need not destroy the old history and start a fresh one; you may be able to rectify yourself, but the com-

munity will not be able to change, unless you proceed on those lines on which it has gone on for a considerable period and our efforts should simply be to remove the excrescences of the injurious customs, which in every climate and in every nationality necessarily crop up from time to time I do not think I should detain you any more I have spoken to you upon the principal questions I know that this slow process that I have been endeavouring to press upon you will certainly be distasteful to certain minds. This will fill many minds who are in favour of a rapid change being effected with a feeling of despondency. But I must say that in my opinion the surest way of reaching our goal is to adopt a policy of persuasion and education—the policy of educating the community and evoking their sympathy thereby. There are some I know amongst my friends who take a much less favourable view of the destinies of our people. They are those who look upon the inhabitants of this great country as belonging to that inferior type of humanity, which is destined, to adopt the language of Dr. Pearson, to occupy the black belt as opposed to the white belt of the globe Gentlemen, if you proceed on the lines indicated by me, I am sure you will be able to make a great many improvements, and eventually you will be destined to get a large measure of success within the limit supposed to be allowed to this inferior branch of the people To those who think that our future is indefinitely great, there is no room for despair. Even if you suppose that it is so, judging from our own procedure, our own habits and customs, our want of self-reliance and so on, even to those who take that despondent view, I say 'Consult any book which

is written [redacted] the subject of social evolution, and you cannot but [redacted] that there is [redacted] great future before you, and in order to achieve this end you should proceed not only with the perseverance which is worthy of the great cause that we have before us, but also with the spirit of patient confidence and hopefulness, which I think our surrounding circumstances justify.'

THE HON'BLE SIR JUSTICE BHASHYAM AIYANGAR*

SOCIAL Reform, which is now powerfully exercising the thought and action of our countrymen, is unquestionably a most useful field of labour. And what is social reform, but the improvement of ourselves, our homes, and the society in which we live? Society acts on the individual, and is acted on by him. Remember, gentlemen, that in this all-important and never-ending task, you have to proceed wisely and cautiously. 'Moderation is like the silken string passing through the pearl of virtues." No society has ever improved by a revolution. Revolution may bring about a social dissolution but cannot construct. In our zeal for reform, and in the vehemence of our individual convictions we are apt to overstep the bounds of wisdom and prudence and destroy when we mean to reform. Let us not, therefore, forget the importance of the society of which we are but units. You may condemn in as strong terms as you choose, the masses of our people as illiterate and blind; but there is no despising their power for good or evil. If the reform you aim at is to be real and lasting you must take the community with you; and how can this be done unless you first study their opinions, prejudices, their strength and weakness, so as gradually to win them over to what you hold and believe to be right? One of the greatest impediments to social reform is the great gulf of feeling and thought, that now separates the educated from the so-called uneducated class. And here we have to correct ourselves of a fatal error that has crept in to fashionable use by the conventional sense in which we use the word "educated" to designate only those who have received English education, as if all our countrymen ignorant of English, including the best cultured, in oriental literature and philosophy, are to be classed as uneducated. Burke observes: "What is education of the generality

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*Extract from his Convocation Address.

of the world? Reading a parcel of books? No Restraint and discipline examples of virtue and justice: these form the education." The true patriot and reformer is not the man who despises all who are beyond the small coterie to which he may belong, but he who with openness of soul and heart is prepared to instruct and be instructed Let me remind you again that your first endeavour must be to secure the sympathy of those for whose benefit you labour As truly observed by Mr Grigg, in his address to the graduates last year: "No country can flourish with an academic body which is out of sympathy with the people from which it springs" It is, of course, open to those who wish to secede from the Hindu community to do so, and not actively concern themselves with its social advancement or to claim its privileges The changes that have taken place in popular opinions and convictions during the last quarter of a century, and the reforms that have sprung out of them, are, by no means, so inconsiderable as we are apt to imagine Some they seem sufficiently encouraging And the conviction that works in most of our minds that we have done but little as yet, and ought to do more, augurs well for the future of our social reform. I do not believe that the orthodox Hindu community is so blind and perverse as to be incapable of new impressions and rational ideas On the other hand, they seem to me to realize fully the rising importance and influence of the English educated portion of the community, and to be willing to co-operate with them provided these will meet them on a common platform prepared to convince and be convinced. The Hindu social institutions of the past are susceptible as experience shows, of progressive re-adaptations and are not so inelastic or crystalized as they are sometimes represented to be" Bear in mind that only some steps in advance are possible at a given time and that errors must be gradually displaced.

The ruling convictions of mankind are often swayed by feeling, imagination, usage and tradition more than by logic and reason. If we examine the sources of popular morality we shall find that re-

ligious sentiment, cultivated moral sense, public opinion or positive law exercises influence, in varying degrees, on men's character and actions The sphere of positive law is limited In modern Hindu society, for obvious reasons, public opinion will have to be relied on as the most efficient regulator of the actions of the individual. It must, therefore be the constant endeavour of all true reformers to create a sound and healthy public opinion in the community to which they belong, an opinion moulded out of what is best in the literature philosophy *and religion of the East and of* the West The influence of such public opinion on the individual and the community cannot be overrated It will be the duty of every one of you to defend it, and demonstrate by your example the wholesome influence which it ought to exercise In all questions of social reform as in politics we have to look to the practicability in the near future of the change proposed and, not unfrequently have we to choose between two evils Do not despise small reforms for which Society may be prepared, simply because they do not satisfy your ambition On the other hand reforms which are small in themselves but are regarded as revolutionary by the people, are not worth your attempt. Let not your reasoning faculty and critical mind be *exercised in scanning manners and etiquette by mis*taking them for morals God manners are made up of petty sacrifices' There is a wide scope for individual action in several matters of importance in which reforms, conducive to the welfare of the Society, can, with a certain degree of firmness of will and decision of character, be accomplished without doing any violence to Religion or Social organisation The progress made in this direction, we must confess has as yet, been but little We ought to be able to effect it without seeking the interference of the Legislature in concerns which in all civilised countries are not generally attempted to be regulated by Positive Law. Do not neglect an existing institution which may be utilised to the greatest public good. Let your endeavour always be to arrest its decay and extinction and to improve upon and refine it.

BABU NORENDRO NATH SEN *

WHAT ■ p u ticularly w anted however, in Bengal, as in the other p u ts of India, is that social reform should be carried on strictly national, that is Aryan and old Shastric lines among those who aspire to be known as good Hind s _f we wish to make the cause of social reform a success we must proceed with caution and make no attemp to introduce violent changes in our social organisation. The object of this Social Conference is more to educate public opinion in all the problems of social reform than anything else. You may safely leave to time the results We must call to our aid the authority of our sacred books, and of the ancient history of our country in our work of social reform There is enough in our ancient volumes to show that the social system of the Hindu in the past, was altogether a model one, and we cannot do better than follow it, if we are at all anxious to regain our lost national greatness.

There is not another question more difficult and delicate than that of social reform, and it should be approached wi t the utmost sobriety, and discussed in such a spirit as might not give rise to the least friction. We must show extreme tolerance for the opinions and feelings of those who differ from us on the subject, ■ that even the most orthodox and bigoted might, in time, come into our fold, and become of our way of thinking Social reform is not meant for the liberal few, but for the backward many

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* From his presidential address at the Social Conference

RAI BAHADUR LALA BAIJ NATH*

I SHALL, with your leave speak of the work done by Vaisya during the eight years it has been in existence. Its first sitting in Meerut was attended by only 36 members of the Vaisya community. Its seventh sitting in Delhi was attended by more than 350 delegates from out-stations, and about 2,000 visitors from Delhi. Its last sitting in Bareilly was attended by delegates and visitors not only from the North-Western Provinces but also from the Punjab Rajputana and other parts of India. It has now more than a hundred branch associations subordinate to it, all working on the lines laid down by it. It counts among its members *not only men of the new, but of the old school also*. Many of them are leaders of the community in their respective centres and so great is the interest taken in its proceedings that last year, when in Delhi the question of the lowest marriageable age for girls came up for discussion, the excitement among the Vaisya community of that place was very great. The question became the topic of the day all over the town, and the resolution was passed after the most vehement discussion and amidst the greatest excitement. Similarly in 1906, in Ajmere, when the question of the settlement of caste disputes by private arbitration was being discussed, some sympathetic outsiders appealed to the Conference to procure the amicable settlement of a local dispute about a religious procession which had been going on among the Vaisyas of Ajmere for some year past, and had cost them enormous sums of money. The matter was enquired into and some of the members of the Conference undertook to act as arbitrators. The lecturers of the Conference and its papers are doing good work in disseminating its aims and objects in the community and it is some satisfaction to find the more progressive among us often inviting our lecturers to lecture on social reform on occasions of marriages,

* From his presidential address at the Socia Conference.

and providing these ■ entertainment for their guests instead of the nautch girls of old. The ages of marriage both for boys and girls prescribed by it have the sanction of the best Shastris of these parts and are being adopted by the community. The scale of expenditure prepared under its direction is also finding favour among the community and it is not uncommon to find people settling beforehand that marriages shall be conducted according to its rules The old system of indiscriminately throwing away large sums of money on occasions of marriage is now gradually giving place to its employment in a more useful manner and one of our prominent members last year set ■ good example of giving ■ part of the money he was going to spend on the occasion of his son's marriage, as a donation to the Hindu College of Benares and another ■■ ■ fund for the establishment of ■ female school in Delhi. Even in the latter place, which is remarkable for its love of show and pomp, ■ branch of the Conference has been successful in materially reducing the expenditure on some of the marriage ceremonies, and in altogether putting down the others. The offenders against the rules of the Association are looked down upon and in some cases a nominal penalty is also imposed upon them The system of advertising for husbands and wives may seem new to the East but we find our caste paper, the *Vaisya Hitkar*, generally full of advertisements from parents and guardians of both boys and girls eligible for marriage These advertisements are always matter of fact productions and describe the position in life of the advertiser, the age, health, education of his child, and the kind of husband or the wife he requires. Last year the Conference discussed the effect of the present system of education upon the youth of the community and it was probably due to its initiative that some very desirable changes in it were introduced by the authorities in these provinces In order to widen the field of employment of the younger portion of the community the Conference has set itself about having them trained in arts and manufactures in foreign countries ■■ well ■■ in India by those of its members who own mercantile and manufacturing or banking firms. Its orphanage

and Ayurvedic dispensaries are also gaining in popularity and altogether it has a good future before it. Above all it has succeeded in rousing the *Vaisyas* to a sense of their condition both in the past and the present, as well as provided the means of inducing a feeling of affection and regard among its members, and even if it had done nothing else, that alone would have entitled it to its gratitude. I have spoken of the work of the Vaisya Conference as I happen to know it best. The work of the other caste Conferences, like the Kayastha and the Bhargava, is no less praiseworthy. If the reformers have not been able to achieve the success they deserve, it is because they have to work in a society where education has not yet made much progress among the masses, and where old but unreasonable customs are still holding their sway.

THE LATE JUSTICE MUTHUSWAMI AIYAR *

AGAIN social progress is and must be, if I may so call it, a *continuous development* The development in the past offers to you a rich inheritance though it is also attended with peculiar dangers. In the great mass of general principles underlying the social system in this country, and many of which are products of exigencies felt in archaic and other stirring times of which we can now have but an imperfect notion, there will assuredly be a mixture of error which may operate on men's minds with the traditional power of immemorial prescription,and may from the very reverence due to their age, easily obtain dominion over you. It would be folly either to abandon from indolence or self-complacency the advantage of your position and to build up an entirely new social system even if it were possible to do so or to accept what is as the best that can be had in the authority of prescription To avoid the danger it is necessary to examine anew the whole body of what has descended to you from the past and to question and trace each element to its origin The proper spirit in which such work should be undertaken, is, to borrow from a philosophic jurist, one of intellectual freedom, of independence of all authority, but this sense of freedom should not degenerate into arrogant dogmatism, but should be tempered by that feeling of humility which would result from an unbiassed contemplation of *your limited individual powers*. Thus gentlemen, the revision of the labors of the past, in order to gradually eliminate what is unsuited to the requirements of modern culture and appropriate to what is suited to them ■ your permanent possession is necessary to enable you to deal with the great problems of social life which will confront before India ■ regenerated In calling your attention to the revival of Sanskrit literature and philosophy in connection with progress I desire that you should recognise it as a means whereby you may improve the

* From his Convocation Address.

Vernacular literature and I may say until this work of revision is taken in hand by the graduates of the University and until the results of their research and criticism are presented to the reading public through the Vernacular medium it would be *premature to hail* the regenerated Indian as carrying the people with you when you suggest changes for the improvement of your social system.

Never denationalise yourself never blush to own that you are Hindus and never barter the influence which you possess among your countrymen and which you may exercise on their good, for the petty vanities of dress or taste. Remember what an eminent English statesman once said: "Before all things and above all things I am an English gentleman." Be gentlemen in the sense in which the great statesman used the word

THE LATE RAJAH SIR T MADHAVA ROW *

WHAT I OBSERVED AND RECALL

"WHAT is it? It is that too much of the destructive and too little of the preservative and little or nothing of the constructive spirit prevails especially in sociological matters. Thinking men must beware, lest the vast and elaborate social structure which has arisen in the course of thousands of years a valuable experience should be injured or destroyed without anything to substitute, or with a far worse structure to replace it. The destructive spirit is prompted by an alien education. It is also felt to be a good deal remunerative. It is commended and even applauded by foreign agencies, specially appointed and liberally paid for the work of destroying local religion and sociology — at least for greatly altering them on foreign and unfitting models.

But the conditions of sound progress require that what exists must be vigorously defended by those who know, appreciate and value it. Under the circumstances stated above, the defensive or preservative spirit is not exercised with sufficient vigour. In short, if the existing good be not adequately defended, destructive action might succeed much more than it ought. I think it, therefore, the duty of such of the native community as know the value of the existing system, the growth of incalculable years of natural special development, to be much more active and vigorous than they appear to be in defending what they value against thoughtless or prejudiced aggression. This work of defence cannot be as remunerative as the other, but it would be on that account all the more patriotic or praiseworthy. The drift of my remarks being thus made clear, I may invite attention to the following extract from Herbert Spencer:—

Non-recognition of this truth characterises too much the reformers, political, religious and social, of your own time: as it has characterised those of past times. On the part of men eager to rectify wrong and expel errors, there is still, as there ever has been, so absorbing a consciousness of the evils caused by old forms and old ideas, as to permit no consciousness of the benefits these old forms and old ideas

* From his Writings and Speeches.

have yielded. This partiality of view is in a sense necessary. There must be division of labour here as elsewhere. Some who have the function of attacking, and who, that they may attack effectually, must feel strongly the wrongness of that which they attack; some who have the function of defending and who, that they may be good defenders, must overvalue the things they defend. But while this one-sidedness has to be tolerated, as in great measure unavoidable it is in some respects to be regretted. The latter will grow wiser less serious and more active less intolerant than those who lived here in the past, and who exist still abroad, the one set with their fanatical tendencies to attack destructiveness of the one side and an unreasoning bigotry on the other; yet even in our country and age dangers arise from the want of a due bothsidedness."

IS IT REALLY PATRIOTIC?

Is it real patriotic, I ask to expectorate to despise, and to denounce everything connected with your country, with your countrymen, with your forefathers from time immemorial, with everything connected with your religion, with your zoology, with in short, everything your own? And yet you must admit that patriotism is a virtue necessary for self-preservation, self-contentment, self-love, self-respect, self-hope, and self-progress. Pray, find out who taught you to abrogate the noble virtue of patriotism and to adopt its dismal contrary. If you find him out, erect for him a statue of the blackest marble or metal.'

REASON AS THE SOLE GUIDE

A few words to those who wish to set up their own reason as the sole guide of conduct in life and to discard social and theological rules.

The age abounds with such persons. They scarcely seem to understand that individual reason is a very imperfect and erring guide and that principles and rules deduced from the knowledge and experience of previous generations are essential to human happiness. To such persons I cannot explain the matter better than in the words of Herbert Spencer; who says:—

"Clearly, then, a visionary hope misleads those who think that in an imagined age of reason which might forthwith replace an age of beliefs but partly rational, conduct

would be rightly guided by a code directly based on considerations of utility. A utilitarian system of ethics cannot, at present, be rightly thought out even by the select few and is quite beyond the mental reach of the many.

'The value of the inherited and theologically enforced code is that it formulates with some approach to truth, the accumulated results of past human experience. It has not arisen rationally but empirically. During past times mankind have eventually gone right after trying all possible ways of going wrong. The wrong goings have been habitually checked by disaster and pain, and death; and the right goings have been continued because not thus checked. There has been a growth of beliefs corresponding to these good and evil results. Hence the code of conduct, embodying discoveries slowly and almost unconsciously made through a long series of generations, has transcendent authority on its side.'

"Nor is this all. Were it possible forthwith to replace a traditionally established system of rules, supposed to be supernaturally warranted, by a system of rules rationally elaborated, no such rationally elaborated system of rules would be adequately operative. To think that it would, implies the thought that men's beliefs and actions are throughout determined by intellect; whereas they are in much larger degrees determined by feeling'

I beseech the reader to study the foregoing words with all the attention in his power, and to apply the purport to this country of an ancient civilization. He will then be cured of his contempt for the rules of conduct which it has inherited from time immemorial, and he will be cured also of his wish to set up individual reason as the standard of conduct and what is worse, not his own native reason, but the reason of an altogether different and distant people.

A COMMON MISTAKE.

It is that of supposing that Hindu social customs are the dictation of the Rishis of olden times. You might as well suppose that the long course of a mighty river is the result of the turn given by the few boulders which met it at its origin. In point of fact the course of the river has been determined by the property of water which makes it seek low ground and avoid high ground. Similarly social customs have taken courses determined by the property of the human mind which makes it seek pleasure and avoid pain.

WHAT SOCIAL REFORMERS OUGHT TO KNOW AND DO.

It is the truth that society, as it is, is the product far more of *natural evolution* than of *Brahma manufacture*; that the *thorns* which accompany the *rose* are the *product* far more of natural evolution than of the parliament's manufacture.

There is a *true* conclusion about society. There is a *false* conclusion about the same. It is desirable that every reformer should know these conclusions and should know the difference between them. The true conclusion about society is that it is the product of natural evolution during very long periods of time. The false conclusion about society is that it is the product of the manufacture of such men as Manu, Sankaracharya and other great law-givers and teachers. Obviously, there is a great difference between the two conclusions. Those that believe in natural evolution will not be in a great hurry to make large alterations in society. On the other hand, those that believe in Brahma manufacture will clamour and press for large alterations in society by means of political and other artificial agencies.

A HINDU MUST BE PROUD OF BEING A HINDU.

I say this with the confidence inspired by long study, observation and experience.

My belief is that if a competent committee of philosophers were appointed to compare the Hindus with other civilised communities, its verdict would be very largely in favour of the Hindus in point of social and domestic virtues generally.

The Hindus, of course, have some serious failings. But taking the net result, that is, virtues *minus* failings, they, the Hindus, will take a high place in the comparison.

Their sobriety alone would carry decisive weight. What civilised community is there that can produce the example of a hundred thousand people gathering on an occasion and behaving in so quiet and orderly a manner?

HINDU SOCIOLOGY.

Retain national and naturally developed peculiarities. Every nation has these peculiarities and India has a very large number of them, because her civilization is probably one of the oldest. The peculiarities of each nation probably best fit the same and contribute to its happiness. They

constitute a sort of heritable and exclusive property Another characteristic is that it is valuable and durable property.

It may indeed admit of gradual improvement. But it would be the most flagrant folly to attempt to destroy such property and to substitute for the same the similar property of other nations.

FACTS EXCEEDINGLY CREDITABLE TO HINDU SOCIETY.

A multitude of such facts might be categorically stated The following are some of them :—

(1) Very rare suits by a husband against the wife for institution or restitution of conjugal rights

(2) There are no suits whatever by a wife against the husband for the institution or restitution of those rights

(3) There are no suits by either against the other for a divorce

(4) Rare [redacted] charges of conjugal infidelity brought by either.

(5) Rare are disputes for the possession of children.

(6) Rare are disputes between husband and wife about property.

Foreign critics too ready to see our faults might accord due appreciation to the foregoing facts.

SOME USEFUL CONCLUSIONS ABOUT SOCIAL REFORMS

(1) What reform should be made, and how it should be made, must be judged by each community, and not by a mixed meeting of the representatives of several communities which cannot but give rise to irreconcilable differences. For example the Brahman community must judge for itself and need not take council with other communities.

(2) Carrying out the above principle, each section of the Brahman community must judge for itself and not along with other sections.

(3) Those that judge for each section must not be all the members of that section, young and old indiscriminately but should be those who are known to possess the greatest knowledge and experience

These principles being granted, I [redacted] bound to state my conviction that the best way to fail in any social reform, is to try to judge in a large meeting composed of Hindus of

different castes and different sections of castes, and of different degrees of knowledge and experience.

WHAT AN IMMENSE QUANTITY OF VALUABLE BLOOD IS WASTED.

It is wasted owing to a little want of discrimination. Men often aim too high and therefore fail. If they lower their aim, they may succeed better. Obviously it would be better to achieve a small good than to fail in achieving much good. Too many men are always trying to achieve one hundred pounds of good and fail, and do not achieve even one pound of good.

Instead, therefore, of trying to eradicate evils, try to diminish them. You have a far greater chance of succeeding in the latter than in the former. The latter is easier than the former.

SOCIAL REFORM.

What is the order in which the social reforms should be undertaken. It is certainly not right to hastily prefer those which are most difficult, those which would be opposed in the highest degree and opposed by the greatest portion of the population and opposed by the most influential of that portion. If your object is not personal heroism or fame, but public good yielding the largest crop in the shortest time, you must consider and act accordingly. My earnest counsel is "prefer the easiest reforms," those which would be least opposed, those which the people may be showing a tendency to spontaneously adopt. To make this clear, I will now give a few examples. Prefer to extend the age of *the girls' marriage* from eight to ten or eleven, rather* than strive to make marriages take place after maturity.

Prefer to induce non Brahmins to marry their girls after maturity rather than strive to make Brahmins do so.

Prefer all sorts of reforms rather than strive to bring about widow-marriages.*

Promote widow-marriages among non-Brahmins. Prefer non-Brahmins going to England and learning arts and manufactures.

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* We may state that late Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row was in favour of widow-marriages and marriages of girls after puberty.

Prefer to expand the education of girls in the R's rather than go much further.

Prefer to educate the girls in the Vernacular rather than in English

Those who are capable of thinking can easily multiply examples of this kind I am sorry to see so many mistakes made. More judgment is required than enthusiasm and impetuosity.

A Comparison of the Indian with the European Widow.

The majority of the widows whether in India or Europe must remain widows for life This is obvious and cannot be denied In the most important matter of shelter, food and clothing, who is better off, the Indian or the European widow? The aforesaid three important items are contributed to the Indian widow as a matter of obligation and duty by her own family friends and relatives and she has in return to do comparatively easy domestic work. On the other hand, a European widow has to earn these items by her own hard work rendered in most instances to hard-hearted and unnatural disposed strangers I must here repeat the question, which widow is really better off? Why don't the various associations in the country discuss and determine such practical questions?

The Prospect of Widow Marriage Reform.

What are the chances of Brahmin widow-remarriage? I mean in the present state of affairs The chance of a widow consenting is one to one hundred. That of a man consenting to marry her is one to one hundred. The chance of the parents consenting is one to one hundred The result then is one to one hundred × one hundred × one hundred which is equal to ten lakhs. Allowing for errors, the result may be one to five lakhs

Would it not, therefore, be better to attempt easier and more fruitful social reforms such as would reduce the chances of widowhood. I refer to my advocacy of later marriages. That is to say, after the girl has attained her tenth year, in preference to much before as at present.

The Good of Widow Marriage.

Do not exaggerate this It must not be supposed that all widows would marry and become happy women.

Out of every hundred probably seventy-five will refuse from considerations of custom and religion. From the remaining twenty-five deduct those who have had children. Those who are very plain looking. Those who are very poor. Those who are past the bloom of youth. Those who are not healthy. The remainder likely to find husbands and willing to marry must be very small How small I want the readers to estimate and say as it will be useful to do so.

CHILD WIDOWHOODS

These are keenly lamented over Let those who are concerned only think how the calamity could have been averted by following the advice repeatedly given to delay the marriage of girls till after the tenth years of their age How is it that even intelligent natives do not yet understand that much of this kind of misfortune might be prevented by delaying marriage to as late a period as may be without violence to the Sastras or approved usage? The whole point is in a nut shell Do not marry boys and girls till after the ages of greatest mortality have passed, according to medical science or ordinary experience. I follow this principle in my practice and earnestly invite others to do so.

A BIT OF OBSERVATION AND RESULT.

Whenever young widows fall under observation or come under notice, inquire and ascertain if they were not married before ten years of age or to boys before fifteen years of age.

You will find this to be the case in the majority of instances.

What is the lesson to be drawn from this? It is that you should not marry your girl before that age or to boy before that age.

It is quite possible for you to do this.

You ought to do it, if you care for the happiness of your dear child and for that of yourself and your wife.

It does not require more than common-sense to understand and appreciate this.

THE VOLUNTARY ENDURANCE OF HINDU WIDOWS.

Many young men educated in English do not seem to know that this voluntary endurance is not irrational. What can be more obvious than that a woman who is

without a husband, cannot afford to live up to the mark of a married woman. She must not get children and therefore must live well below that mark. It may possibly be otherwise in other countries, where there are plenty of foundling hospitals, baby-farming establishments and orphanages. These are wanting in India. Thence the existing usages of the underliving of the widows. Those who blindly declaim against these usages would do well to understand the considerations which I have indicated

A NEW ASPECT OF THE MATTER.

Does it not occur to a thoughtful mind that [redacted] of widows of discretionary age absolutely refuse to remarry in spite of natural instinct and all the urgings of pertinacious reformers, those widows that find, in their *unremarried* condition, a certain *net* balance of satisfaction or compensation; in other words, more pleasure than pain and in the remarried condition more pain than pleasure? If the widows themselves feel so, who are the reformers, who have never been widows themselves, to assert the contrary and to claim to supersede the judgment of those who are immediately concerned, and who are to be the actual recipients of the pleasure or the pain concerned?

This aspect is suggested only to emphasise the necessity of greater patience and persuasion on the part of the reformers.

APPENDIX B.

NATIONALITY *vs.* RATIONALITY.*

(By Prof. M. RANGACHARIAR M.A.)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I am very glad that our work here to-day has begun with the authoritative announcement from our honored and worthy Chairman that the Hindu Association under the auspices of which we have met, is not started with any feeling of opposition or any spirit of jealousy and intolerance in relation to any other persons or body of persons of whatever rank, who holding opinions which are on important points different from our own, are still striving to achieve the same end that we have in view, namely, the welfare and the progressive advancement of the interests of India and of the Hindu community as a whole. I know that such an announcement is particularly needed now; because during the last few days certain persons claiming the authority of leadership and the incontrovertible right of rationality have been indulging in a great deal of jeering and flouting on public platforms in Madras with the object of ridiculing all those who disagreed with them in regard to the manner in which the work of popular, social, moral and religious improvement is to be carried on in this ancient and historic land of ours. I feel highly thankful—and I am certain that all those who have had any thing to do with the organisation of the Hindu Association, which is now launched forth in this auspicious manner will feel equally highly thankful—to the acting Chief Justice of our High Court, Sir S. Subramania Aiyar, for his having lifted the Madras Hindu Association at its very first meeting of public inauguration to the high and

* Speech delivered at the inaugural meeting of the Madras Hindu Association on the 1st January 1904.

impersonal level of principles and calm conviction Everywhere it is seen that much less progress is achieved by quarrel and by personal controversy than by thoughtful composure and the wise action of dignified and patriotic statesmanship However, it may be asked—and rightly too—what necessity there is for bringing into existence another body of associated individuals to do the same or very nearly the same work which is being done by other bodies which have already been in existence for some time. Such a question is a perfectly natural one to ask; and the reply we give to it is that although the social and moral and religious advancement of our mother-land is our aim, even as they claim it to be theirs, still there is this vital difference between them and us. We mean to adopt in all that we do no attitude of opposition and irreverence in relation to what constitutes the spirit of the ancient and peacefully progressive civilisation of India, and our endeavour to improve it is not intended to be based on any new-fangled and unsuited ideas which some in this country have imbibed in recent years from other civilisations current under other natural conditions and belonging to other quarters of the world Our chief object is that this work of helping on the advancement of the Hindu people and their civilisation must be conducted in keeping with the trend of their long accumulated historic forces and in obedience to the inner spirit and the moral motives that have been actuating those forces all along It has been declared pretty frequently of late that this kind of difference between bodies of patriotic workers is really no difference at all We have been told that it is not a thing of any very serious importance in any matter which method of work is adopted by workers who are really sincere and in earnest, and that, as long as the object in view continues to be good and worthy, we need not at all trouble ourselves about the spirit which inspires and impels those who labour in the field of Indian advancement from day to-day. This manner of stating the case makes it look very plausible; nevertheless, the difference in regard to the method of work and the spirit of the worker is not in any case too insignificant to be safely neglected alto-

gether. There may be much wise tolerance and friendly fraternity between bodies of workers so differing from one another ; but *it is not possible to make them all* become merged into one body. We may all work together shoulder to shoulder in a spirit of toleration and perfect mutual understanding. To every one of those who do not agree with us and at the same time wish to work on different lines for improving the conditions of civilisation in our country, we are all willing to offer the right hand of fellowship and say : "Look here, brother, you have the good of our country at heart quite as much as any of us have. You love our motherland, and feel for her and work for her according to your wisdom and convictions. But the light that is within me points out my way to be different from the one which you follow. Therefore I cannot walk along the same road with you. Nevertheless, I freely own that you are also endeavouring to go to the same goal which we strive and hope to reach. Go on, work, march and make our mother India prosper by the work you do and by the distance you thus manage to cover on the road that leads to our common goal of advancement." This kind of toleration and friendliness is quite possible and it is very highly desirable also. But that spirit of union, which will cause the fusion of our principles and convictions with the principles and convictions of those who more or less radically differ from us, is altogether impossible to have, although it so happens that the goal which they have in view is very nearly the same as what we too have in view. We hold that the effort to tear ourselves away from the historic influences of the past of our national life is wrong in itself; and it is surely calculated to end in failure. The freedom from social control that some among our countrymen hope to acquire by transplanting themselves, even while they are at home in India into the wholly new atmosphere of *a wholly new civilisation is utterly* an unrealisable dream ; and every endeavour made in ignorance to realise it is certain to make the future of the country decidedly worse than the past. Thus the question of method is not at all an unimportant one On the other hand, in connection with the problem of

working for the social, moral and religious advancement of our country, this question of method is one of very vital importance. In all matters the question of method is of importance in determining what particular plan of campaign it is that is to be followed and whether in that plan certain things are to be done or are not to be done at all. Let us for example, take the case of a doctor who has to treat a patient so as to free him from his illness. He may follow either what they call the symptomatic method of treatment or what they call the rational method. When he has not discovered the cause of the disease by successfully diagnosing the case of his patient, he can only adopt the symptomatic treatment. If, however, he has arrived at a correct diagnosis of the case and has thus found out the true cause of the disease, then he naturally adopts what is called the rational method of treatment so as thereby to cure the disease by trying to root out whatever happens to be its cause. Here the patient is one and the same person; his ailment also is one and the same; and the doctor's object, whether he adopts the symptomatic method or the rational method of treatment, is assuredly to cure the illness of the suffering patient. Nevertheless, you will all see at once that the remedy which the doctor prescribes for the good of his patient must necessarily vary with the method of treatment that he has made up his mind to adopt. The symptomatic prescription cannot be the same as the rational prescription. Here is a case in which the method of operation directly determines all the details of what is to be done and what is not to be done. Every doctor knows that although the rational method of treatment is decidedly superior to the symptomatic method, still there are cases in which this latter method of treatment is the only thing that is possible and to some extent helpful. Thus the rational doctor need not jeer at the symptomatic doctor as a quack, nor need the symptomatic doctor flout the other as a mere visionary and theoriser. In this way the method by which we endeavour to work out an object is not only not unimportant in itself, but is also of great value in enabling us to know rightly what our immediate duty is in respect of our

carrying out the ultimate end that we have in view If for a moment we apply this view of the matter to the question of Hindu social improvement and progress, we shall at once see how the method of work we desire to adopt determines naturally the attitude we are to have in relation to the traditions and the *authority of the society which we are anxious to* strengthen and to improve whether we are to discard the traditions and undermine the authority of that society with a view as it is said, to make its progressive advancement easy and more and more possible thereby or whether we are to improve and unify those traditions and thus enliven the authority so as to *make it more and more effective in inducing* and helping on progress in all desirable directions It is needless for me to point out here that the former of these two views corresponds to the symptomatic and the latter to the rational method of medical treatment. What we have at issue here is not therefore a small matter; we have here something more than mere opinion and *self-assertion. Among us in these days* people mention various methods of social and religious reform which are classified or arranged in various ways Some naturally approve certain of these methods for adoption, while others approve other methods Many however, are under the impression that the question of methods is by some really made too much of. I have also examined according to my capacity the various methods that are now denoted by various names with the object of finding out what their underlying differences are. To my mind it appears that there are only two really different methods possible in regard to the work that has to be done for the purpose of encouraging the social, moral and religious advancement of this country in the present condition of our history. These two methods are what may be called the constitutional and the rebellious methods, or the method of evolution and the method of revolution. The former of these is in harmony with all the chief traditional forces which are more or less actively in operation in society; but the latter is not in harmony with them, but feels uncomfortable under their control and tends to revolt

against them. Indeed this latter method openly encourages the individual to break loose from all such inconvenient [redacted]al regulations and restrictions [redacted] he may in his judgment deem to be uncalled for or unwarranted The former method operates quite constitutionally in relation to all authority, and dutifully obeys it even when it is being subjected to criticism and correction. To criticise authority when it goes wrong and works injustice, to correct the errors that are always more or less incidental to its exercise, and to purify and ennoble more and more the very sources of authority are all highly necessary in all departments of human life and activity so long as the setting in of decay and deterioration in them has to be guarded against and checked in the interest of civilisation. And this kind of criticism and correction as applied to erroneously operating authority does not at all mean the same thing as the adoption of that other method of reform, which is based on the conviction of the individual and makes him feel that whatever is not conducive to the freedom of his own progress and conscience is not therefore conducive to the welfare of society as a whole, and that consequently it can be nothing other than virtue and heroism to revolt against it and reject it as completely as possible This process of operation is known in the language of some of our modern social reformers as the rationalistic method, the conscience method, the courage-of-conviction method and so on; and by whatsoever name you call it, it finally amounts to this—that the individual must have unrestrained freedom to assert himself against the authority of society [redacted] well [redacted] of religion in any matter in which he happens to feel that that authority is not quite righteously exercised in relation to him We do not want to say anything personally against those who believe in the efficacy of this method of work and act in accordance with it, although we ourselves believe in the method of evolution and do not believe at all in the method of revolution, as that which is best suited to encourage our social and moral and religious progress. This classification of the various methods of reform under the

heads of evolution and revolution is not altogether unsupported by non-Hindu thought and observation in India to-day. With reference to the [illegible] understanding that arose here in Madras in connection with the preparatory arrangements that had to be made for the holding of the Indian National Social Conference as an adjunct of the Indian National Congress which was in session in our midst during the last few days, a Bombay newspaper, the *Dnyanodaya*, remarked with a clear-sighted comprehension of the situation that the conflict was really between the two methods of evolution and revolution. It said that those who have a distinct principle as to method of reform, to the effect that it shall be distinctly an evolution of the national life and in no sense a revolution, cannot work with advantage with those who are not afraid of a revolution Nor can the latter make their revolution complete, if hampered by those who cling to evolution. And being apparently an organ of the Christian Missionary, it naturally encouraged a rapid revolution in Indian life by making the emphatic declaration that revolution is the only true path for reform. A local magazine, also belonging to a body of Christian Missionaries, has taken into consideration the difference of opinion between the two sections of Hindu 'reformers" as to their choice of [illegible] hod, and has thrown the weight of its support on the side of those who are inclined to oppose authority. Although this magazine does not go to the extent of openly advocating *revolution in preference to evolution it still* encourages in a very blunt and open manner both social *and religious disloyalty on the part of English-educated* Hindus When newspapers and magazines edited by Christian Missionaries to serve the purpose of Christian propagandism tell us with bookish certainty that revolution is the only method by which it is possible to achieve progress in Hindu society or that the process of evolution has given rise to no progress in any country at any time, or that social and religious disobedience and disloyalty are virtues that are worthy of high appreciation, we can surely understand the inner meaning of their attitude in relation to the con-

tinued vitality and unity of Hindu society and of its immemorial civilisation. The religion of the meek Jesus who preached the heart-enthralling peace, which is so aglow in the famous *Sermon on the Mount*, has somehow made many of its over-ardent followers mislead and misrepresent the lessons of history so that so many of them now manage to see in God's government of the universe that progress is always accomplished through disorganisation and disruption through revolution and bloodshed, and rarely if at all, by means of the slow and steady operation of the wholesome and harmonious forces of construction When these worthy readers of the wisdom of Providence put us on the back and ask us to cast our lot with those who are disloyal and rebellious in spirit, are we not bound to make sure that their advice is thoroughly disinterested before we begin to act according to it? Of course there are Christian missionaries and missionaries; and I have heard it said that the open manifestation of what may be called hostile sympathy in relation to any one is a sure sign that all is not well with him. Therefore without troubling ourselves very much as to how far this advice is worthy and well-meant, we may safely come to the conclusion that to work for the progress of our country by *taking advantage of the slow and steady operation of* all the wholesome forces that are found therein is fully in keeping with true wisdom, in keeping even with that highly vaunted nationality which has been made to be the same as nationality under the patronage of the National Social Conference, which went through the work of passing its dictated resolutions in a fairly quiet manner yesterday And after all is nationality the same as nationality? No student of history can deny that there is a complete and consistent course of nationality in the processes which underlie the evolution of every nationality known to history. In this way we may see that there is much real nationality in nationality; and surely those who worship nationality are therefore bound to hold nationality also in high esteem, and ought not, if they know themselves, to ridicule and make light of reform on national lines.

But where it is the rationality of any one single individual that is raised to the rank of, and made equal to, nationality there we are ■ from feeling satisfied with the rationality of the given equation. We know that too often even men who think grossly wrongly are apt to set a high value on their own rationality. If, however, we somehow free ourselves from this personal source of error if comes out to be true that all wise men think alike and that rationality supersedes nationality Thus the rationality of a Chinaman, for instance, may agree with the rationality of an Englishman, and the rationality of the Japanese may also agree with that of the Hindu. It is indeed ■ well known truism that the laws of accurate thinking are unaffected by the varying conditions of differing nationalities. But does this in any manner justify our ignoring the natural fact of nationality, particularly when we are endeavouring to improve the concrete conditions relating to the hard realities of the lives of men and women bound together by a corporate bond of social unity and mutual co-operation and helpfulness? If, for instance, the ultimate ideal of progress and human civilisation is taken into consideration ■■ ■ problem for which ■ theoretical solution is required, it is possible that we shall obtain in regard to it the same or very nearly the same opinion from many thoughtful men of many nationalities But when these reasoned ideas and opinions of really wise and thoughtful men are to be made to work actually in the life of a society, the whole question assumes ■ very different aspect What we have to do for the purpose of making these wise and rational ideas become concretised into helpful social and religious institutions, and how these institutions, when created, have to be guided and worked safely in the storm and stress of life and all its competitive conflicts, are obviously dependent upon the concrete conditions and the physical, physiological, mental, moral and other actual aptitudes which characterise the various human communities with which we have to deal. For example the concrete conditions of French society differ from those of English society ▮ and

these again differ from those of Hindu society. In fact we can find no two different human communities, the concrete conditions whereof are the same in every respect. Although Indian nationality may very well agree with English nationality, for instance, it is impossible for the nationality of the Hindu to become identical with the nationality of the Englishman. As long as the path of the past history of England is different from the path of the past history of India, and as long as the present conditions of life and civilisation in India are inevitably different from those conditions as they are now current in England, so long indeed it is impossible to merge English nationality in Indian nationality or Hindu nationality in English nationality. The fact of nationality has been a more potent element in history than even the most flawless rationality of denationalised individuals. Let us not therefore magnify the importance and infallibility of our own nationality to the extent of neglecting that greater and surer nationality which underlies the nationality of all ordered human communities. Reform on national lines may clash sometimes with the self-sufficient rationality of certain high placed or low placed individuals; but it is as a matter of course in complete consonance with that larger rationality which determines and differentiates nationality. Gentlemen, if there are among you persons who think with us and agree with us in this matter, and who are also patriotic enough to work for the advancement of our country and to make readily and ungrudgingly the required sacrifice for that work, I have not the slightest hesitation in declaring that our newly organised Hindu Association will receive them all with open arms, provided that they are at the same time willing to fight the battles of progress under its banner with the supreme conviction that no individual's rationality therein ought to have the authority to override our united nationality. We beseech you all to bear in mind that, unless the individual works in due subordination to the forces which make up his nationality and give unity and strength to the corporate life of his society, there can be no true and lasting progress achieved on behalf of that society or national-

ity Please remember this well, and cherish at the very centre of your heart this great principle of service and self-subordination, and come and join our ranks — that we may all discharge well in concert our duties of high patriotism and noble humanity — the lines of natural growth and healthy evolution. In earnestly inviting your co-operation and in calling upon you to undergo labour and thought and sacrifice we can only offer you in return the scope for more and more of labour and thought and sacrifice It is always the privilege of love and patriotism to labour and to sacrifice, and love always loves because it must Therefore, whenever you are called upon to love and to undergo sacrifice in discharging the great duties of the service of country and the service of man do not ask for any return over and above the scope for service, which the call gives you, — soon as you are willing to respond to it; but be pleased that by responding to it you and your belongings become worthy to be hallowed by being offered unto God who everlastingly dwells in the eternally holy shrine of truth, patriotism, philanthrophy and religious realisation. In ancient days in this country it was ordained that those who were in any way apt to ask for any return were not fit to render service to society — the way of offering to it wise counsel and sure and safe guidance. Young men had first to undergo, as *Brahmacharins*, the religious and moral discipline of student life, wherein they learnt the lessons of reverence and obedience, and learnt also how to appreciate and honour their own nationality and the inherited accumulation of culture and morality on which that nationality rested. Then they had to live their lives as householders among householders, discharging all their social obligations as well — family obligations in a thoroughly honourable manner, and acquiring the fullest possible experience of the trials and the temptations of life, so — neither to be lured by its sweets — to be disheartened by its bitters. After undergoing such training and after living so fully and to such advantage the life in society, the householder — expected to retire from the busy bustle of social and domestic life, — that

he might have the opportunity of calmly meditating upon the experiences of his life and draw lessons of wisdom from them. Then he was at last to adopt the life of renunciation and non-attachment and go out, it he chose, ■ the teacher and guide of the many men and women who were still living their lives in society. In this arrangement people could be always sure that those who had the title to preach and to offer guidance to society had the needed training, and were in full possession of the required experience of life, and had also the more necessarily required freedom from personal bias of *all kinds*. I need *not* tell you, *therefore*, that the man, who feels that he has been victimised by the society against the discipline of which he has rebelled, is in no way fit to be a guide to that society Pray do not take any such man to be your leader in regard to the work of accomplishing the progress and perfection of Hindu society If you follow the lead of any such man, there is always the certain danger of your being misled by his personal equation ■ against your society and its regulations. Rebels may and often do successfully relieve themselves from the obligation of *loyalty to the authority which they discard* and disobey ; but their temerity becomes phenomenally strange when they begin to complain that the society to which they have proved disloyal does not honour them as leaders and does not at once obey their bidding. Is it not strange that the foot which kicks in contempt expects to be honoured by ■ kiss in return ? The method of rebellion and revolution kills love, magnifies the sense of self-importance, and makes it impossible for a leader to grow unconsciously under auspicious circumstances and in ■ favourable atmosphere. It censures and blames where it ought to love and be helpful ; it destroys where it ought to construct, and constructs what it does on the uncertain foundation of individual rationality. It is out of considerations like these that the Hindu Association has been started It proposes to work for Hindu advancement on really national lines It discourages rebellion, but at the same time ■■■ to strive constitutionally to obtain all such social and religious reforms ■■ ■■

needed in the interest of true progress. I have already spoken to you much longer than I intended to do. Therefore permit me to conclude my remarks by drawing your attention to the carefully drafted statement of the aims and objects of the Hindu Association. You, who are interested in the progress of the Hindu community in India, will, after perusing it, be able to judge for yourselves those aims and objects, so as to ascertain their value and worthiness. And if, as we hope and believe, you become convinced that they are good and worthy, is it too much to expect that you will all help the Hindu Association gladly and make it a power for good in this grand and noble country of ours, which we all love so well and so dearly? Our due place in the history of man we cannot and ought not to give up, and God in His wisdom will lead us aright, if we in our turn prayerfully discharge our duties well without the smallest taint of selfishness or the least tendency to self-assertion.

Mrs. BESANT ON HINDU SOCIAL REFORM ON NATIONAL LINES.*

Brothers, Why is it that we have met here this morning in numbers so vast, so thronging? What is the object that has gathered us together? What is that we hope that we intend to do? We are here to take another step on the path along which India is treading to her rightful place among the nations of the world. We are here to lay another stone in the great building of the Indian edifice, so that working for the future, we are not to make that future the present and bring it right home to our doorways, to make it a reality and not merely a dream. Some words have already been said why another Association should be founded with views in some respects similar to the one that has been working among us for many years. The answer comes in the first words laid down in the printed paper of the objects of the Hindu Association, that it intends *to promote Hindu social and religious advancement on national lines in harmony with the spirit of Hindu civilisation*. That is the distinguishing mark. While we have quarrel with none, while we have harsh words for none, while we have condemnation for none, we yet claim our duty to choose the path which, we believe, leads best to [redacted] goal; and that path is a national path and not a foreign one, one of Hindu civilisation and not of Western civilisation, (hear, hear) one in which, while we will take from the West everything that is useful that can enrich our knowledge and enlarge our hearts, we will take nothing that despiritualises India, nothing that denationalises India, nothing that makes her simply a copy instead of a divine original. We do not want a plant of exotic growth that will wither before the Indian sun and will be torn up by the Indian storm; we want a plant of Hindu growth and of Hindu root, that grows stronger when the Hindu [redacted] blazes upon it and is able to resist the tornado [redacted] as well as the tropical heat. (Cheers). No

* Speech delivered at the inaugural meeting of the Madras Hindu Association on the 1st January 1904.

reform is lasting, no change is permanent which is not based on the traditions of the nation and in accordance with the genius of the people. I am not commending Western ways, Western traditions, Western customs. Were I in England I should tell them to base their institutions on English history, English genius, English thought; but in India I claim the same right of originality for the Indian nation to base her growth on Indian traditions and to build in accordance with Indian architecture. A house is not well built which is a mixture of every style of building; here a bit from the architecture of England, and there a scrap that comes from China; here a doorway that has a Mussalman stamp on it, and there a turret that recalls an English Cathedral spire. Build your temple as an Hindu temple, and then it will stand; but if you build into it scraps of the architecture of every other religion you will have a grotesque anachronism and not a national building. (Applause).

EDUCATION OF HINDU GIRLS.

What are the main points to which the efforts of this Association are to be turned? I picture to those which are most important, and on which the evolution depends. *The education of Hindu girls and women in accordance with the ancient ideals, and in keeping with modern requirements*— there is the point on which the future of India depends (hear, hear.) From the mothers of India, the future generations of India must necessarily rise. Indian women in all the splendour of their religious devotion, in all the radiance of their purity. Unless you carry them with you, there is no India for the future; for Indian womanhood is part of the Indian nation, and Indian motherhood is the object of worship of the Hindu heart (Hear, hear) Now you will never carry Indian womanhood with you, unless your lines are Hindu. You will never tear out of the heart of the Hindu woman her love for her ancestral faith; you will never make her turn her back on Savithri and Sita and on all the noble women of India of the past who are bound up with her most sacred memories. Hindu Dharma has its temple in the heart of Indian women, and if you desecrate that temple, Indian womanhood will not march forward with you. But unless she goes forth with you, you have no true civilisation. Children suck their ideas from mother's milk and their first impressions are gathered round her knees. What must you do to raise

India? You must raise their women; you must make their religion — wide as it is devoted; you must make their minds — thoughtful — they are pure; and in order to do that, you must educate them Without education either men or women miss their full stature. Educated men need wives who are educated; but how? In a way that will make them lose the ideal of Hindu women of the past; to be made simple B.A.'s and M.A.'s, little-rate copies of their husbands? That — not what you want You want — woman who is spiritual, you want a woman who, at the same time that she is spiritual, is also enlightened, who could be *your counsellor as well — your religious ideal*, who will add to her faith knowledge, and so influence husband and sons, religiously — well — otherwise; and for that you must give them an education founded on their faith, you must teach them along religious and along national lines, an education that will make them better wives and better mothers and not an education useless to them to play their part in Indian civilisation (Cheers). English education modelled on different economic conditions where the woman is the competitor of man—that is not what you want for Indian women. You want one which will make them know the past of their land and which will train them in their own Sanskrit and Vernacular literature, which will make them proud of the past, which will make them realise the future towards which we are going. You do not want to revolutionise Indian womanhood. You only want her to grow along the ancient lines to the ancient stature. The education then of Indian woman is the fundamental object of this Association.

EDUCATION OF PANDITS AND PRIESTS.

Then after the education of Hindu girls and women, you come to the education and enlightenment of Hindu pandits and priests. There is another great class, utterly apart, at the present from the ideas which are moving the minds of English educated Indians. The pandits and the priests are not in sympathy with national aspirations, with the hope of national progress. They are cut off from it by an utter ignorance of the present, however learned they may be with regard to the past. Therefore, they exercise — real influence over the minds of the English educated men. Their legitimate influence, their useful, their wholesome influence in restraining the over-eager, in checking the over-hasty, is utterly lost to the

country. How can it be given back? By leading them to realise and understand something of the other side of Indian life, the life which is moving in the hearts of the young English educated classes. Therefore, the Association proposes that in dealing with the pandits of the future they shall not only know the religious and moral literature which belongs to Hinduism, but shall be familiarised with modern European thought and culture and their sympathies and active co-operation gained in the necessary changes that must come upon the land. You want to give them a touch of the civilisation which is so largely dominating the minds of the English educated men, and in order to do it, you must no longer have the exclusive Sanskrit education, but you must also teach the pandits of the future that English language which is the common language of India from North to South from East to West and so enable them to learn to add to their treasures of learning and scholarship that last touch of modern thought which will make their ancient thought more influential at the present day and enable them to play their indispensable part in the growth of the Indian nation. (Hear, hear). That is another of the great planks of the platform that we advocate before you to-day.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF BOYS.

Then we come to the religious education of Hindu boys and girls in all Hindu Schools and Colleges. How vital that is you can see if you look round you. Why, only yesterday I stood face to face with a Brahmana, of high social position, of high intellectual equipment, who, trained in a Jesuit College by the carelessness of those responsible for his training, is on the verge of renouncing his ancestral faith and leaving his ancestral religion and embracing Christian faith. (Cries of "shame"). Shame; but shame to whom? To that young man (cheers), to that young man who, placed as a boy, plastic and helpless, in the hands of the Jesuit teachers, has been moulded like plastic clay by their fingers and has taken every sophism that they present to him as a truth direct from the mouth of God, or shame to those who place plastic minds in the hands of the Jesuit and the foreigner? And shame, most of all, not to the one man, who sent his son to that fatal influence, but to the whole community which has been indifferent to its ancestral faith, and cared not whether its boys lost or kept their religion, provided they

gained the Western veneer which was sufficient for the gaining of livelihood. I do not blame Western veneer. I do not want you not to educate your sons on Western lines. That is necessary in the present condition of India But, why, at the same time, not give them Hindu religious and moral education? Why not place within their reach the priceless treasures that the past has bequeathed? By all means give them the jewels of Western learning. Why should they not be enriched by them? But do not deprive them of the diadem, the diamond of the Eastern faith in which all colours are found, blended into one pure ray of light, that diadem of Hinduism which is your priceless heirloom, and which India cannot afford to lose. (Cheers)

HINDU MARRIAGE REFORM.

Then we come to the question of marriage reform, and one of the most vital questions with which a nation has to deal; for, on the home, the nation is builded, and on the ideal of marriage depends the future of the race. Now the proposals that are made in order that undoubted evils may be met and eradicated are not revolutionary in their character. It is proposed to gradually raise the age of betrothals and marriages in the case of girls as well as boys, thereby diminishing the chances of early widowhood. That point of raising the marriage age is one of vital importance to the nation. Look at it for a moment from the ordinary standpoint The Indian health is going down. Indian boys, when they come out of the College are not the vigorous, strong and healthy youths that they ought to be; they are too often worn out by their studies and on the verge of nervous weakness or nervous collapse Look through your middle age section, you will find they have touched old age rather than middle age. You will find, with the competition of modern life coming on them at the same time as the comparatively modern Indian ways of living, that this is devitalising the body and is making them old before their time. The question touches, of course, on certain religious precepts, and I am not going to discuss with you here the details of interpretation of isolated texts. But this I say, there is no possibility that the revelation of *Iswara himself in nature shall be in contradiction* to any revelation of Him that comes from the mouths of the Rishis. If you find that God in nature has stamped certain laws ineradicably as to marriageable age, if you find that disregard of these laws is leading your nation rapidly

to physical decay, then you may be sure, that if an isolated text commands early marriage there is some blunder in the interpretation of that text, and that Iswara in nature and God Himself in nature cannot have possibly ever made certain conditions necessary for national health and laid down other conditions in the written record of the Shastras. It is absolutely necessary to restore in India the ancient rule, the rule of Manu, the Law given, as stated also by many lesser men; and that law is that the student shall be a Brahmachari and that he shall not enter the married state until the student's state is over. (Hear, hear.) What would Manu say if he came into your schools and found, as I have found, boys in the Entrance class with a child at home? (Cheers and laughter.) What would he say of the people who claimed his name but neglected his law, when he finds the Grahastha stage and the Brahmachari stage so intermingled that none can say where the one begins and the other ends? Restore the ancient Ashrams; give back to them their ancient sanctity; tell the student that until a Brahmachari finishes his duty and until the study is over, he has no right to enter the Grahastha state. Then by obeying the old law you will give back to India the physical vigour which is decaying, and out of a strong and vigorous nation you will build your national prosperity

THE EDUCATION OF WIDOWS.

Then the education of widows is specially spoken of in order that a way may be opened to them which will make them useful to the community and happy in their own lives, treading that noble path of human service which is marked out for those who are truly widows to tread for the sake of men; and you will have done away with that blot on Hindu civilisation, the child virgin widow—a wife truly in name but not in fact—on which the whole edifice of the complaint is built up. Going thus to the root of the evil you will find that the superficial evil will gradually disappear and you will realise that in following these lines of reform you will help India forward and in doing away with the undoubted ills.

MINOR REFORMS.

There are other minor points which you find in this programme of reform on national lines. Such questions as the treatment on their return of England-travelled men

find their place here, and the principle laid down is this: that when a man obeys the old rule during his journey and returns to live as a Hindu and not on Western lines, then the Hindu Society shall welcome him and put no obstacles in his path. (Hear, hear). That is a matter of vital importance; for many of you elder lads will travel, they will go to England, will go to the European Continent and learn many a thing of priceless value to you; and if when they return they are Hindus and not aliens, if they have not polluted their bodies by wine drinking and meat eating, and if they have kept back from the vices of Western civilisation, and if on their return they are willing to live as moral and religious Hindus, why shut them out of your community and make them enemies instead of helpers and friends? This Society will work for the reception of such travelled Hindus, for their restoration is most needed to Hindu Society. Such roughly are the objects of the Association. The question now for you to decide is whether these objects are well drafted and whether you will help in carrying them out. That some changes are needed every thoughtful man will admit; that there is an amount of ignorance in the country that needs to be enlightened, all lovers of India must declare; but on the nature of your decision as to whether it shall be, as put by the first speaker, evolution or revolution, the future of India depends.

THE GREATNESS OF INDIA.

India is not a little unimportant country that can be merged in another, losing its national character and disappearing in a greater land. There is no nation great as than India in the surface of the world. India has a right and a duty in the civilisation of the future; she is not simply to repeat the modern notes of younger nations; she has to sound out her own mighty note which belongs to her among the nations of the world, and this not only for your interest but also for the interests of the Empire and for the interests of the world at large. Unless you keep your own national characteristics, unless you preserve your religion, unless you walk along the road that suits the national genius, India has no national future in the building of the coming civilisation. You have something to bring to it that other nations have not; you have thoughts to bring to it that other nations have not yet conceived. You have to spiritualise the world and not merely your own people; and

you cannot do that, if you lose your spirituality under the flood of foreign and modern thought If Association then stands on the old lines but wades to wade along them ; this Association must make itself distinctively Hindu to walk along the lines of Hindusthan, to carry with it those elements of the world that are still ■ vastly, the learned and the non-learned classes They have to be gradually made to enter the higher realm of thought. Against them it (the) will always be conflict, but if them to walk with you and India will go swiftly forward along her path.

AND ELSEWHERE

But I [illegible] by saying to you what I have said [illegible], but if ■ seeking the treasure [illegible] of the Past, you [illegible] life Without Hinduism there [illegible] do not mean Hinduism [illegible] but of virgin and strength, and [illegible] and with a word to say to [illegible] Hindu, India was born, and [illegible] India will perish You will [illegible] that you really need for the [illegible] fees; and if you build with [illegible] then your building will stand th[illegible] is beginning to look to you for [illegible] look if she finds only a filth [illegible] arrangements intellectual and [illegible] that will do you hold you[illegible] labours, if she sees that while [illegible] on that old are cleared off [illegible] the lands, if she sees that to be [illegible] to stagnate or to retrogress, [illegible] are loyal to their faith are [illegible] that which by process of time [illegible] put in its place new grafts that [illegible] then the world will be glad of [illegible] the words that she speaks. Take [illegible]ally and ■ ■ely planned, and [illegible]ow your heart into it and work [illegible]es.) Do not come here to cheer [illegible] to your own country, into your own [illegible] of social and moral better- [illegible]re pledging your hands. For

listening to you are those who love India, mightier than men, yet human in their love — they inspire the movement which will raise the country without destroying its distinctive features. And if you cheer a speaker, remember that these cheers are your pledge registered before the high gods, that you give your life to the cause of India's helping, (cheers,) and that you will not simply for the moment cheer the mere flash of speech of a speaker, but give your heart, your life, your money, your best thoughts to that regeneration of India for which the whole world is waiting, and for which the world will bless you if only you carry it out right. (Cheers.)

AIMS AND OBJECTS OF
THE MADRAS HINDU ASSOCIATION.

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1. The Association shall be styled the Madras Hindu Association

2. Objects:—

   i. Promotion of Hindu social and religious advancement on national lines in harmony with the spirit of Hindu civilisation

   ii. Adoption by means of a well correlated system of education, of all that is helpful in outside civilisations into the life of the Hindu people

   iii. Continued endeavour to work out from time to time such changes and improvements, in relation to the social and religious institutions of the Hindu people, as are ripe for accomplishment and are needed in the interests of true progress.

   iv. Protection of the unity of Hindu society by enabling it to withstand all such aggressive forces as operate against that unity, as well as by working to infuse strength and enlightenment into all the sections of that society so as more and more to consolidate that unity

3. Means to be adopted:-

   i. Dissemination of correct ideas regarding the Hindu ideals of life and conduct by means of writing, teaching and preaching and by working in other ways from within the community for its advancement.

   ii. The education of Hindu girls and women in accordance with Hindu ideals and in keeping with modern requirements.

iii. (*a*) The education and enlightenment of Hindu *pandits* and priests, so as to equip them well both with the ancient, religious and secular learning of India and with the results of modern European thought and culture, and thus ensure their sympathetic and active co-operation in the achievement of the various social and religious changes that may, from time to time be found necessary in connection with the organisation of Hindu society and its institutions

(*b*) The organisation of periodical conferences of *pandits* and English-educated Hindus for the purpose of advancing thereby the objects of the Association

iv. The enlightenment and uplifting of the depressed and the backward classes of the Hindu community, by organising and bringing into operation Hindu missionary work among them, so as to give them religious and secular instruction and by helping them by means of works of charity and philanthropy calculated to raise their moral and material condition.

v. Religious education of Hindu boys and girls in all Hindu schools and (if and as far as may be) those that are maintained by the State.

vi. The affording of facilities for the readmission into the fold of Hindu society of repentant converts into alien religions, and the seeking and obtaining of religious sanction therefor when necessary.

vii. Endeavour to provide for the maintenance and up-bringing of Hindu women in accordance with Hindu ideas of life and conduct.

viii. Marriage-reform. This has to be worked out so as not to conflict with the high spiritual and sacramental ideal of Hindu marriage, but so as at the same time to

dim[illegible] as possible, all avoidable
mis[illegible] hardship that may arise out of
the [illegible]ge relation. It is on various
gr[illegible] considered inexpedient for the
[illegible] as a body to take up the ques-
[illegible]e-marriage of widows.

At [illegible]te to be made

([illegible]adually raise the age of betrothals and marriages in the case of girls as well as boys, so as thereby to diminish the chances of early widowhood and its attendant hardships.

( ) To discourage money considerations in concluding marriage alliances.

) To diminish the expenditure on marriages and to simplify the festivities connected with them.

The education of widows, and the organisation of institutions wherein they may be looked after and trained to help on the progress of Hindu society and religion consistently with the ideal of service and renunciation prescribed for them by the Hindu religion.

[illegible] affording facilities for the admission of 'foreign-travelled' Hindus into their community, provided they continue to be Hindus in life as well as in religion.

[illegible] encouragement of interdining and intermarriages between the members of the various sub-sections of each of the four chief castes.

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